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Arab-Israeli Talks

Rabin Aides, 'Abbas Hold Meetings in Morocco

TA2212101493 Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew 22 Dec 93 pp 1, 15

[Report by political correspondent Shim'on Schiffer and Arab affairs correspondent Smadar Peri]

[Excerpts] There have been signs of progress in the discussions between the PLO and Israel which began last night in Paris. Many difficulties remain unresolved, however, and both parties are holding tough negotiations.

It has been learned that secret contacts were held in Morocco and another Arab country over the past few days, in addition to last week's discussions in Oslo, in an attempt to bridge the gaps between the parties' positions with regard to the implementation of the Declaration of Principles on self-administration in the Gaza Strip and Jericho. Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin sent Labor Knesset Member Rafi Edri, accompanied by the prime minister's political adviser Jacques Neriya, to the Moroccan capital of Rabat for a series of meetings with senior PLO official Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas]. Edri and Neriya landed in Tunisia aboard a private jet on 18 December. The two men met with President Ben Ali and delivered a message from Rabin.

Afterwards, in Morocco, King Hassan participated in some of the meetings between the Israelis and Abu-Mazin. The Moroccan king exerted great pressure on the PLO representative to get his organization to moderate its positions on issues of contention with Israel.

Meanwhile in Israel, Prime Minister Rabin, speaking to a private forum, revealed that Egyptian President Mubarak had urged 'Arafat to moderate his positions. Mubarak told 'Arafat: "It is time for you to get a foothold in the territories and take a step toward implementing your aspirations." Saudi Arabia has also recently threatened 'Arafat that it will withhold all financial support if he adopts an obdurate stance in the negotiations with Israel.

A formula which may lead to a breakthrough was worked out in the course of the discussions with Abu-Mazin and the Palestinians:

- Israel will retain full responsibility for external security in the Gaza Strip and Jericho during the interim period, but at the same time, the Palestinian police force will enjoy a wide range of authority at the border crossings.
- Israel and the PLO will divide up control of the two major border crossings: the crossing between the Gaza Strip and Egypt, and the crossing between Jericho and Jordan. Israel is prepared to accept the establishment of checkpoints manned by Palestinian liaison officers next to the Israeli checkpoints.
- Palestinians from the Gaza Strip and the West Bank and Palestinian visitors to the two areas will be processed through a Palestinian police checkpoint before passing through the Israeli checkpoint.
- While Palestinian travelers are at the Palestinian checkpoint, the Israeli police will check them and their travel documents with the aid of electronic equipment.
- The Israelis will have the right to prohibit the entry or exit of Palestinians. They will also be permitted to order random body searches.
- Israelis and non-Palestinian tourists will not be subject to Palestinian border checks.
- Israel rejects the PLO demand for an international presence at the border crossings.
- Exceptions will be made for the passage of VIP's (the reference is to Palestinian leaders).
- Israel will also permit PLO liaison officers to set up checkpoints on the Jerusalem-Jericho road and in Gaza Strip areas adjacent to the Green Line in the south.
- Israel will agree to expand the area turned over to Palestinian control around Jericho. [passage omitted]

Sources in Jerusalem have expressed the assessment that 'Arafat has decided to adopt more flexible positions out of the fear that progress in the peace negotiations with Syria "will come at his expense."

The assessment is that 'Arafat believes that 16 January, the date President Clinton will meet with Syrian President al-Asad in Geneva, will herald a change in the regional order of priorities, to the Palestinians' detriment. The sources in Jerusalem said that al-Asad has let the Americans understand that he will not come to the meeting empty-handed and that during his meeting with President Clinton, the Syrian leader will agree to establish full peace with Israel in exchange for full withdrawal.

PLO-Israeli Agreement on Crossings Disclosed

NC2112145993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1405 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Tunis, 21 Dec (MENA)—Informed Palestinian sources have disclosed that an agreement in principle was reached during secret meetings held recently with the Israeli side. The agreement stipulates that a joint Palestinian-Israeli committee will supervise the border crossings between Gaza and Jericho, devise requirements and details for entry procedures, and revise these arrangements regularly.

The Palestinian sources explained that both sides will have the right to object to unusual entry cases according to set criteria. There will be two checkpoints: The first will be a Palestinian checkpoint, where travelers will pass and be inspected by the Palestinian authorities, without any Israeli involvement. Travelers will then pass through an Israeli checkpoint, where they will be subjected to security checks by Israeli officials.

The sources, however, affirmed that the issue of crossings in Gaza and Jericho still represents a primary obstacle to an agreement on beginning to implement the Palestinian-Israeli Declaration of Principles.

'Text' of PLO Draft Proposal on Boundaries

TA2112153793 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 20 Dec 93 p 1

["Text" of the Palestinian draft proposal presented by the Palestinian delegation to the Gaza-Jericho negotiating committee]

[Text] The boundary of the Gaza Strip will be as follows: In the north and east, the Israeli borders; in the west, the Mediterranean Sea; and in the south, the international Egyptian borders. As for the boundary of the Jericho area, in the east, it will be the Jordan River; in the west, the western mountains; in the north, the Nabulus district; and in the south, the Dead Sea and the Jerusalem district.

It is necessary for the two parties to reach agreement on a temporary international or foreign presence on the territory of the Palestinian national authority. This presence is to be formed from among international observers from the United States, Russia, and west European countries, and will be funded from a budget allocated by the donor states. It will be possible to extend this presence for another year after the implementation of this agreement and after a mechanism for cooperation and coordination between the two parties is put in place.

The security crossing point will be free and safe for the transit of individuals and goods between the Gaza Strip and Jericho, especially for Palestinian civilians, members of the national security force, and officials of the national authority. Movement through the crossing point can take place at any time, without restrictions. Those using the crossing point and travelers do not have to be residents of Israel only.

The security crossing point will be used all year round, except for Yom Kippur. The other roads between Gaza and Jericho may be used, without restrictions, by individuals and for the transport of goods. The Israeli authorities can verify the validity of driving licenses and insurance policies upon the entry of vehicles into the security crossing point.

Conclusion of PLO-Israeli Economic Accords Denied

TA2112180093 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 20 Dec 93 p 19

[Excerpt] Tulkarm, QUDS PRESS—A member of the Palestinian delegation to the economic committee talks' with Israel has denied that the Palestinians had reached any economic agreements with the Israeli Government.

Dr. Muhammad Ashtiyah said that "no worthwhile progress had been made in the economic talks between the Palestinian and Israeli delegations in Paris," contrary to what Israeli Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres had announced. Peres recently stressed that in the Paris talks, the Palestinian and Israeli negotiators had reached agreement on setting up a free market and a customs union between Israel and the Palestinian self-rule authority.

In a statement to QUDS PRESS, Dr. Ashtiyah emphasized that what had been discussed were "mere proposals." He referred to the dangers of setting up a customs union with the Israelis at present, adding: This will lead to separating the Palestinians from the Arab world.

According to Dr. Ashtiyah, during the economic talks in Paris, the Israelis had called for establishing joint customs. [passage omitted]

Palestinian Affairs

Executive Committee Denounces Israeli Stands

LD2112180693 Algiers Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1702 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Brother President Abu Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] on 20 December said that talks between the Palestine Liberation Organization [PLO] and Israel were expected to resume in Paris today to try and end the delay in implementing the Palestinian self-rule agreement.

President Abu Ammar displayed some displeasure at the outcome of talks which took place at the beginning of the week in Norway between Palestinian and Israeli delegations. [passage omitted]

A PLO statement today said that the Executive Committee denounced the Israeli statements and positions which were trying to assess the essence of the dispute and to maneuver to waste time and to [avoid] faithfully and precisely implementing the agreement within the fixed timetable. It said [Israel] was trying to turn the withdrawal steps and Palestinian supervision over the crossing points into mere formalities.

'Abbas Says 'New, Young' Leadership Needed

JN2112182193 Amman AL-BILAD in Arabic 22 Dec 93 p 7

[Report on an interview with PLO Executive Committee member Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin, by Fu'ad Abu-Hijlah, in Tunis; date not given]

[Text] Mahmud 'Abbas, alias Abu-Mazin, PLO Executive Committee member and architect of the Palestinian-Israeli agreement, has announced that he will not go back to the self-rule region. He said he will live abroad, probably in Tunisia, to pursue efforts to achieve strategic Palestinian objectives and contribute to resolving future issues. These include the question of the refugees, the settlements, and others. Abu-Mazin said the future needs a new, young Palestinian leadership.

In a frank interview with AL-BILAD, Abu-Mazin ended his silence and his breach with the press. He said things

are not proceeding now according to his own vision. "Even if they did, I do not want to be part of it," he declared.

Abu-Mazin asserted he will not taste the dish he himself cooked, referring to his decision not to take part in the self-rule authority agreed upon at the conclusion of secret Palestinian-Israeli talks. Abu-Mazin was the principal architect of these talks for the Palestinian side.

We asked Abu-Mazin: Is it not strange that the man who signed the agreement with his own hand should not take part in the self-rule authority? He said: There are other tasks which require intensive action to be accomplished.

Abu-Mazin denied that differences with Abu-'Ammar [Yasir 'Arafat] had led to a breach or estrangement, asserting that he would not allow differences to create a split. He said he had not been cross with anybody, as reported in the press. Nor did he stay in Morocco, except during a five-day official visit in October.

Abu-Mazin said it is unlikely that he was a target of liquidation. He also discounted 'Arafat being a target of assassination. He said inter-Palestinian differences will not reach such a level, particularly at this stage. He welcomed dialogue with the opposition factions. He added that the future needs a new, young Palestinian leadership.

Regarding appointments in the self-rule authority, Abu-Mazin said: Some names have been suggested by the press, but these names are not acceptable and will not be given important posts in the self-rule authority. He asserted that the administrative cadres which now operate in Gaza and Jericho will be kept, except those who have collaborated with the occupation authorities. Only the police force will come from abroad. This is why it has been highlighted by the media, even though it is only one of many agencies that will run the self-rule region.

Abu-Mazin added that Israeli withdrawal from the self-rule area will begin shortly. He said that the fact that withdrawal did not begin on 13 December does not mean reversing the withdrawal decision.

Abu-Mazin denied that he had discovered the spy 'Adnan Yasin in the course of a conversation with Shim'on Peres. He said this is untrue, asserting that the Tunisian security agencies discovered the spy.

When we asked him about the bugging devices planted in his office and the "chandelier" which we did not see at all in his office, he said: The bugging devices were inside a chair and a table lamp. The chair was replaced and the lamp was removed. He said the devices were put in his office 10 days after the Palestinian-Israeli agreement was signed in Washington. The devices were discovered 10 days after they were placed in the office. This means that the spy did not get any information of real value, because everything was being done in public and on television.

Abu-Mazin asserted that the spy was after political information. He was a political, and not a security, spy. Abu-Mazin approved of the name "peaceful spy".

On prospects for Palestinian-Gulf relations, Abu-Mazin was hopeful about opening the Gulf gate. He said: "It is only a question of time. Every time I visit the Gulf states, I feel there is more progress."

Al-Tibi Rejects Rabin Remark on 'Abbas

TA2112195393 Jerusalem New Channel 2 Television Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Studio interview with Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi, "special adviser to Yasir 'Arafat," by Gay Zohar—live]

[Text] [Zohar] Let me first ask you the question that interests Israel and Rabin the most: Will Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas] head the PLO delegation to the talks in Paris today?

[Al-Tibi] I spoke to Abu-Mazin some 15 minutes ago. He is in Morocco. He is leaving there this very minute, but not for Paris. Abu-Mazin will not head the Palestinian delegation and will not attend the talks.

[Zohar] Does this mean that the PLO rejects the compromise Israel has offered on the issue of the border crossings?

[Al-Tibi] This does not mean anything. The delegation is headed by Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh, and the discussions that started in Oslo will continue in the same forum.

[Zohar] As far as you know, does the Palestinian delegation carry new compromise offers?

[Al-Tibi] In Oslo, Israel presented what I would call a non-paper, an unofficial paper, with certain offers regarding control over the border crossings. The offers are not acceptable for the Palestinian leadership at this stage, but they are being discussed. Answers will be given today and tomorrow in Paris.

[Zohar] Is it true the Abu-Mazin supports Israel's stand on the issue of the border crossings?

[Al-Tibi] Who said that?

[Zohar] Yitzhaq Rabin.

[Al-Tibi] I was very sorry to hear the remarks attributed to the prime minister; I was even shocked. I suggest that the prime minister be more careful when he makes such declarations.

[Zohar] You spoke to him today, and he does not think so?

[Al-Tibi] Abu-Mazin is the head of the PLO International Relations Department. He represents the PLO stand and his stand is very far from the current Israeli Government stand.

[Zohar] What is exactly the current PLO stand? Is it willing to accept some form of cooperation in the border crossings, in return for a total concession on the issue of the borders?

[Al-Tibi] It has been agreed that there will be coordination on the issue of control over the border crossings. Now we have to reach an agreement about the shape of this coordination. This is what is being discussed at this time. I hope an agreement will be made in the coming days or weeks.

[Zohar] Forgive me for pressuring you on this, but has it been agreed that the PLO will have representatives in the crossings on the Jordanian and Egyptian borders?

[Al-Tibi] There will be no other situation other than the presence of Palestinian officers at the border crossings.

[Zohar] Will they also inspect Israeli citizens who travel to Egypt, for example?

[Al-Tibi] The details will be seriously discussed by the committees set up for this end.

[Zohar] How do you explain the fact that Egypt, Jordan, and Morocco—as I am again referring to the remark the prime minister made today—support the Israeli stand, preferring Israeli presence at the borders?

[Al-Tibi] Look, I do not want to refer to what almost sounds like political gossip. Jordan publicly told the PLO that it wants the Palestinians in control and has no objection to this. I am certain the prime minister knows what he says about these countries. I disagree with him regarding Abu-Mazin's stands, naturally. This, however, is not the decisive point. The bilateral negotiations between us will lead to the agreements, and it is very important that we reach agreement on this issue because the entire agreement will rise or fall on this.

[Zohar] Did the Palestinian representatives go to Paris to sign an agreement? Do they have the authority to do so?

[Al-Tibi] No one but the two leaders has the authority to sign agreements. The delegation is there to respond to the Israeli non-paper, presented in Oslo. Israel will most probably respond to this. It is probable that certain progress will made tonight and tomorrow, but it is also possible that we will have to wait a few more days.

'Arafat Petitioned To Guarantee Democracy

NC2112215993 Paris AFP in English 2114 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Tunis, Dec 21 (AFP)—Palestine Liberation Organisation leader Yasir 'Arafat is being pressed to give way for more democracy within the PLO and guarantee respect of human rights in the future autonomy in the Gaza Strip and Jericho.

An official Palestinian source said Tuesday [21 December] 'Arafat had received a petition signed by 120 Palestinian political figures, asking for guarantees for a democratic rule which would respect human rights in the occupied territories after Israel hands over the authority to the Palestinians.

Sulayman al-Najjab, member of the PLO executive committee and head of the ex-communist Palestinian People's Party, handed the petition to 'Arafat this week-end during a meeting of the executive body.

The source said 'Arafat accepted to discuss the petition with a delegation representing the signatories, who themselves have formed a committee to follow up their demands.

The committee comprises Nabil 'Amr, an advisor of 'Arafat, Ibrahim Abu-'Ayyash and Taysir 'Aruri, both members of the Palestine National Council, the parliament-in-exile.

The demands include a call for mapping out a strategy for the negotiations with Israel and setting up a committee for directing the talks. The petition also called for choosing the negotiators according to their political and professional competence rather than their influence.

Among those who signed the petition is Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, the head of the Palestinian delegation to the bilateral talks with Israel in Washington, who has repeatedly criticized the "absence of democracy" in the PLO.

Meanwhile, a draft constitution for the future Palestinian authority that will run the autonomy has been submitted to the executive committee for study.

According to a limited self-rule accord signed by the PLO and Israel in Washington on September 13, 1992, Israel would hand over the affairs of Gaza and the West Bank town of Jericho to a Palestinian authority, which would assign a special police force to take care of security in the autonomous areas.

'Temporary' Economic Body Formed in Territories

TA2112192493 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Arabic 1700 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] The PLO has decided to form a temporary body in the territories that will work within framework of the Palestinian Economic Council for Development and Construction until a construction council is established. Our correspondent Yoni Ben-Menahem reports that this body will consist of Dr. Nabil Qassis, Dr. Samir 'Abdallah, Dr. Muhammad Ashtiyah, Mr. Samir Halilah, Dr. 'Abd- al-Rahman Hamad, and Dr. Samih al-'Abd. Our correspondent adds that this decision was made in view of the good results achieved in the talks at the recent World Bank meetings in Paris, and in view of the possibility of immediate implementation of some development projects in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Al-Shawwa on Progress in Forming Gaza Council

PM2112140593 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 19 Dec 93 p3

[Unattributed interview with Mansur al-Shawwa, Palestinian figure asked by 'Arafat to form the Gaza municipal council, in Gaza; date not given]

[Excerpts] [AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] To the best of your knowledge, has President 'Arafat issued new instructions naming chairmen of the other municipal councils in the Gaza strip or were his instructions just for the town of Gaza?

[Al-Shawwa] As far as I know, there is an intention to appoint some individuals to complete the present municipal councils to fill the posts of those who have died or resigned over the past years.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] How much progress have you made in the formation of the municipal council for the town of Gaza?

[Al-Shawwa] Anyone handling the Gaza municipality should proceed carefully and should deal with all groups of Gaza society. I received the letter of designation two months ago and I am now holding consultations with all groups in the town. I believe it would be difficult to form a municipal council without consultation with all the factions in the arena.

I have accepted the assignment and I have told President 'Arafat that I will tackle this problem in my own way. I am optimistic about the reactions of most trends and I still have to hold consultations with some of them.

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] Why should the mayor not be elected in the context of the self-government authority elections or before so that the average Palestinian people would get used to democracy?

[Al-Shawwa] The people of Gaza want elections and so do I, but such elections must be free and honest and without internal or external pressures and away from political influence in a manner that would ensure that the right man is in the right place. That requires the right atmosphere for such an outcome, but the present reality is different. [passage omitted]

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] How much money does the town of Gaza need to build a sound infrastructure with international standards?

[Al-Shawwa] Between $800 to $900 million. [passage omitted]

[AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT] It has been claimed that your assignment came as a result of a Jordanian request. Is that true?

[Al-Shawwa] No, there is no connection between the Jordanian authorities and this assignemnt. [passage omitted]

Fatah Figure Warns Israel To End Military Action

NC2212094693 Nicosia FILASTIN AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 19 Dec 93 pp 10-11

[Interview with Sarhan al-Salaymah, "a Fatah Movement official in occupied Palestine," by 'Abd-al-Latif Sulayman in the "Fatah office" in Jerusalem; date not given]

[Excerpt] [Sulayman] The Fatah Movement in occupied Palestine has recently been issuing sharply worded statements against the Israeli Government.

[Al-Salaymah] The recent Fatah statements were issued to clarify our position in no uncertain terms. They send a clear message that the Israeli Government must read very carefully. Fatah believes that since the Declaration of Principles was signed, the Israeli Government's positions, at the negotiating table or on the ground, have been out of line with the peace to which we aspire. The Israeli Government must end the terrorist operations that the settlers are perpetrating against the Palestinians in front of the Israeli soldiers. It must also stop the occupation soldiers killing Palestinians.

Since the Declaration of Principles was signed, Fatah has observed orders to halt military actions against Israeli military and civilian targets. Our strike forces, special units, Fatah Hawks, and people who are wanted are abiding by the Palestinian leadership's decision to suspend military activity. But the Israelis have failed to abide by the decision to stop military action by both sides.

In our latest statement, we warned against continuing this policy. If the Israelis fail to respect their commitments, Fatah will retaliate in the appropriate way.

[Sulayman] The Israelis say they have stopped their operations against Fatah and that they are only after the opponents of the agreement.

[Al-Salaymah] We in Fatah categorically reject this logic. The Israeli Government knows it signed the agreement with the PLO, which acted as the representative of the entire Palestinian people. The PLO signed the agreement as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. We will not allow the Palestinian people to be divided into supporters and opponents. Just like the legitimate Israeli opposition, the Palestinian opposition has a legitimate right that cannot be relinquished. Then there are the settlers, who oppose peace and carry out terrorist acts without the Israeli Government seriously trying to stop them. [passage omitted]

DFLP, PFLP Said Considering Moving to Iraq

JN2112200593 Kuwait AL-WATAN in Arabic 14 Dec 93 p 29

[Report by Dawud Almani]

[Text] Damascus—Palestinian sources based in Damascus have told AL-WATAN that George Habash, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine secretary general, and Nayif Hawatimah, Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine secretary general, are seriously considering moving their headquarters and cadres to Baghdad in the near future.

AL-WATAN has also learned that Ahmad Jibril, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine-General Command secretary general, is also considering moving his headquarters outside Syria. A Palestinian source in Damascus told AL-WATAN that Jibril is thinking of moving his headquarters to Tehran.

Hamas Official on Elections, PLO Alternative

TA2112180193 Jerusalem AL-QUDS in Arabic 20 Dec 93 pp 1, 18

[Text] Amman, QUDS PRESS—Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] has deemed it unlikely that elections will be held in the occupied territories within framework of self-rule.

Muhammad Nazzal, Hamas' spokesman in Amman, termed the holding of elections as "improbable." He noted that "the Palestinian side, particularly Yasir 'Arafat, is not eager to hold such elections, because he fears their outcome which, as far as he is concerned, is not guaranteed. As for the Israeli side, it views elections—regardless of their form—as some sort of privilege for the Palestinian people. Therefore, it prefers not to hold elections. Hence, I believe that it is not possible to deal with elections seriously."

Nazzal disclosed that a majority in Hamas supports participation in legislative elections. He said, however, that "the movement had not yet adopted a final position on elections, even if they were legislative." He stressed that "adopting a final decision on this issue requires an accurate study of the electoral conditions and terms." He said that if an announcement is made to hold legislative elections, the issue will be studied by the 10 factions.

Nazzal reiterated Hamas' commitment not to participate in executive elections that might be held in the occupied territories to choose the self-rule authority.

Referring to Hamas' rejection of the opposition factions' demand to declare an alternative leadership to the PLO, Nazzal said: Hamas considers that declaring an alternative leadership to the PLO will not change the reality of the existence of a recognized leadership on the Arab and international levels—a leadership that is running affairs.

Nazzal added: The Palestinian opposition's efforts should be aimed at creating new realities on the ground. This is the real thing that can delegitimize the current PLO leadership.

Nazzal declared Hamas' refusal to deal with any Israeli proposal and said that the movement's activists did not meet with Israeli officials.

On the current differences preventing the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho accord, Nazzal hinted that those differences will be overcome. He said: We believe the accord might be implemented, but it will not realize the Palestinian people's hopes and aspirations for repatriation and self-determination. Time will reveal the accord's negative points and loopholes.

Hamas Spokesman on Iran, Syria, Intifadah

JN2112154793 Amman SAWT AL-SHA'B in Arabic 21 Dec 93 p 17

[Interview with Ibrahim Ghawshah, official spokesman for the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, by an unidentified correspondent; place and date not given]

[Text] [SAWT AL-SHA'B] What did the Hamas delegation do in Iran and what are the results of this visit?

[Ghawshah] Hamas received an invitation from the Iranian Foreign Ministry to visit Iran. The visit came one year after our last year's visit. During this visit, which lasted approximately one week, the Hamas delegation—which was led by Dr. Musa Abu-Marzuq, chairman of the Hamas Political Bureau, and in which myself and 'Imad al-'Alami were members—met with all levels of officials in Iran. The delegation met with Islamic Revolution Leader 'Ali Khamene'i, President Hashemi-Rafsanjani, the foreign minister, the interior minister, and others.

The visit aimed at discussing the developments related to the Palestine question, particularly with regard to the Gaza-Jericho accord. We also discussed the Palestinian situation inside the occupied territory, the future of the intifadah in light of the accord, the future of jihad action, and ways of confronting the Zionist-American expansion, which is monopolizing the whole world and mobilizing support for the Gaza-Jericho accord.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] What were the practical results of the visit?

[Ghawshah] The delegation met with all decisionmakers in Iran. This, in itself, is a big achievement. In our exchange of views, we found that the stands of Hamas and Iranian Government were very close vis-a-vis the plot of the Gaza-Jericho accord and the plot of peace and normalization which the Zionists and the Americans are trying to impose on our nation.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] Have you reached agreements to support Hamas?

[Ghawshah] They are not agreements in the full sense of the word. There is an understanding with regard to the seriousness of the stage, the need to support the Palestinian people with all available means, and confronting the onslaught threatening the region.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] This understanding existed before the visit. So, what was new in the visit?

[Ghawshah] Yes, the understanding existed before the visit, but the visit strengthened this understanding. As you know, continued contacts are necessary to preserve relations and the visit aimed at maintaining these contacts. We hope that all Islamic people and governments will support the Palestinian people. We also hope that this support will improve in the future.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] This answer means one of two things: Either the Iranian support is little, or there is no support.

[Ghawshah] All Islamic people support the mujahidin movement in Palestine, but this support, as it is known, is a limited popular support if compared with the millions or billions poured on the Oslo group.

The fact is that all Arabs and Muslims who want the Muslim Palestinian Arab people to stand in the face of the Zionist onslaught must increase their support in order to confront the dangers threatening the Palestinian issue and the region.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] Does popular support come from religious seminaries in Iran?

[Ghawshah] The support that comes from Iran or other Arab states is limited popular support. You cannot compare it to the billions that the PLO receives.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] You have said you hope for more Iranian support. Does this mean you have not received the sum you had hoped for prior to the visit? How much exactly do you expect Iran to chip in?

[Ghawshah] I have no figures, but we hope for more support from the Islamic Republic of Iran, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf states, and other Arab and Islamic states which have a majority of Muslims. These nations know well the importance of Palestine, Jerusalem, al-Aqsa Mosque, and the important role of Hamas, since it is a primary challenge to the Zionist threat. These nations should support Hamas as a duty, not as a favor. The Muslim Palestinian Arab people are carrying out their role on behalf of themselves and on behalf of all other nations.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] Your visit to Iran coincided with reports that Syria, under pressure from the United States, is planning to drive the 10 factions from its territory. Did you and the Iranian leadership discuss the Syrian position?

[Ghawshah] No, we did not discuss this issue with the Iranian leadership. We think this theory is exaggerated. We do not think Syria is about to conclude an agreement with Israel. In our political analysis, some issues are very difficult. In addition, Syria gives a margin to the 10 factions to express themselves inside Syria. This margin, we think, has not harmed Syria. It does not exceed holding political and media conferences. Real action by the opposition and the resistance against the U.S.-Zionist scheme is inside the occupied territories. In other words, the Hamas movement is based inside the territories, in terms of its leadership and organization. However, there is a margin of political and media activity in Syria. This does not affect the overall activity of Hamas inside the territories. The same goes for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and others.

Therefore, if Syria reaches an agreement with Israel, which we think is unlikely, then it is not accurate to say that such an agreement will affect the performance of the Palestinian opposition. It is true that Syria has some weight in Lebanon, which reflects on the performance of Hizbullah. Hizbullah, however, as everybody knows, receives strong support from Iran. Syria has very strong relations with Iran, so it is not easy for these relations to be severed or to lead to reducing the strategic support of Hizbullah.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] But how can the Syrian-Iranian coalition survive, given that Syria has joined the peace process and Iran rejects it?

[Ghawshah] Theoretically, the question is valid. Practically, however, an agreement between Syria and Israel is a very distant possibility. Therefore, it is reality that counts. As for the strong relationship with Iran, it will continue.

Clearly, Rabin is not concerned about reactivating the Syrian track because he wants to digest the Palestinian agreement first, and because the Syrian track is very complicated. More than half the Jewish entity rejects withdrawal from the Golan Heights. For all these reasons, we see that Rabin is trying to delay any solution with Syria. Christopher's recent tour was aimed at reactivating talks on this track. We should realize the agreement on a meeting between President al-Asad and Clinton next month does not mean things will be settled and the road between Syria and Israel will become passable.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] Are you trying to say that Christopher made no progress?

[Ghawshah] During his visit to Damascus, Christopher was able to obtain a promise to hold a meeting between al-Asad and Clinton in Geneva. He was not able to reactivate the Palestinian track. There are many problems on this track. Regarding normalization with Israel, it seems he got some promises from Tunisia and Morocco.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] Do you have any information on this issue?

[Ghawshah] This is our analysis of Christopher's tour.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] Have you received any information from the Syrians? Do you have communication channels with them?

[Ghawshah] The movement is not a state to say that it maintains communication channels. It is still a young

movement. But, it spares no effort to receive information. More than 90 percent of information is published in the news media. What counts is how to analyze this information and to draw correct conclusions.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] How could your visit to Iran affect your relations with the Islamic movements in the Arab countries, particularly those adopting a negative stand toward Iran?

[Ghawshah] To begin with, most Arab states have relations with Iran. Even Saudi Arabia has good relations with Iran. The biggest embassy in Tehran now is the Saudi embassy. Relations between the two countries are strong. Daily flights carry pilgrims between Tehran and Jeddah.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] Have you found the Iranian leadership convinced about the possibility of aborting the Gaza-Jericho agreement?

[Ghawshah] Iran is subject to immense U.S. pressure through a third party. We have noticed this in all the Arab states Hamas delegations have visited. Zionists and Jews in the world manipulate the United States to warn all the states that reject this agreement. This is clear. We have noticed it in several places. But, we found that Iran understands this agreement clearly. Iran supports Hamas morally and politically. It supports its pioneering role in confronting the Zionist occupation, and this agreement which has relinquished all the Palestinian people's rights in their land.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] Do they believe it is possible to abort the agreement?

[Ghawshah] I expect their views on the agreement not to differ from those of all right-minded politicians, that is, this agreement carries the seeds of its own annihilation. This agreement cannot last, for many reasons, despite the U.S.-Zionist incubator that sustains. The most important of these reasons is that it will not offer the Palestinians anything if basic issues like Jerusalem, the refugees, sovereignty, and the settlements are postponed. Agreement on other issues such as border crossing points, territorial areas, security, and detainees, is not final.

The Tunis leadership or group—we do not want to say the Washington group because it is now nonexistent, nor the Oslo group because it has been frozen—cannot implement the agreement.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] Why?

[Ghawshah] Because of its autocratic nature and because there are no institutions, no expertise. This leadership stepped up its arrogance after shaking hands with Rabin, thinking that having won Rabin's support, the world's support was now in the bag. This explains the great ebb in support for the Gaza and Jericho agreement in the West Bank and Gaza, as revealed in recent elections of trade unions and popular organizations—elections regarded as a barometer of Palestinian public opinion trends.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] Will you continue the intifadah inside the autonomous region after the establishment of Palestinian authority?

[Ghawshah] In the Hamas Movement, we abide by our rules. Intifadah and jihad operations must exist wherever there is Zionist occupation or settlements and settlers. In other words, if the Jews withdraw completely from the Gaza Strip, the intifadah operations in the Strip will completely cease. But, the jihad operations will not cease because the Jews would then continue to exist in other parts of Palestine. However, if settlers and soldiers stay in the Gaza Strip, no power on earth will be able to prevent the movement's youths from attacking the occupation soldiers and settlers.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] This will lead to a confrontation with the Palestinian police?

[Ghawshah] We can say the movement has been able to overcome this problem successfully. In other words, three months have elapsed since the Gaza-Jericho agreement was signed without any clash between Fatah and Hamas.

From the first day, Hamas said it would not clash with its Fatah brothers, that it rejected inter-Palestinian fighting. We do not believe in political assassination. We will not resist the Gaza-Jericho agreement by force. But, we will exert all our efforts to convince our people of this agreement's dangers, errors, and loopholes. We will leave it to the people to discover the facts of this agreement. Now this policy of ours has borne fruit.

As for the Palestinian police, we think Rabin signed the agreement with 'Arafat to place this police in confrontation with Hamas. We would like to emphasize that this police, especially those elements that will come from abroad, are members of the Palestine liberation movement. They were brought up with the conviction that they should liberate their territory, the territory of their forefathers. We do not think they will clash with the stone-throwing children or the mujahidin who want to restore the territory of their forefathers.

The acts of jihad the Hamas Movement has carried out have exposed an issue 'Arafat and Rabin tried to conceal: The settlers issue. The movement struck at the settlers. This has brought to the surface this issue, which has begun to squeeze the throats of those who signed the agreement. More importantly, it brought this issue to the attention of everyone. There are 120,000 settlers in the West Bank and 5,000 in the Gaza Strip. They block roads, set fire to trees, and murder at will. What kind of authority can succeed with their presence? None, not even the self-rule authority.

Back to the Palestinian police, we do not doubt the nature of its individuals. We believe they will find their first and final mission is to protect the Palestinian people from herds of settlers, not to clash with Hamas. Consequently, the scheme Rabin and Peres have set up can be overcome.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] So, the operations of jihad will continue outside the areas in which withdrawal will take place? Effectively, what will happen is redeployment and not withdrawal?

[Ghawshah] Then there will be no halt to operations, even in the Gaza Strip.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] Does this mean clashes with the Palestinian police are inevitable, given assertions by police commanders that they will execute orders to arrest anyone who opposes the agreement?

[Ghawshah] We do not take these statements very seriously. We believe these officers have a certain amount of patriotism that will stop them from playing such a filthy role. We think they will avoid this role. We do not think they will agree to become another Lahd army of south Lebanon. If 'Arafat and those behind him wish to play the role played by the Lahd army, then let them do that. They will be the biggest losers.

I wish to tell you that the world now has a good picture of the young men of the Hamas Movement, particularly the young men of al-Qassam Battalions, their nature, how they think, and how brave they are. They have managed to act against the largest army in the world and carry out successful qualitative operations. We believe they can continue their operations, even with the presence of a police force that is less competent than the Zionist occupation army.

[SAWT AL-SHA'B] Arrivals from the occupied territories assert that Hamas is indeed preparing for the self-rule elections?

[Ghawshah] What evidence do they have to prove this? We have said time and again that Hamas will continue to run in non-political elections, for municipalities, chambers of commerce, student unions, and trade unions. These have nothing to do with the Gaza-Jericho agreement or self-rule.

As for the self-rule elections, we doubt they will be held. Most likely, 'Arafat will postpone them for two years and will not hold them on time.

Hamas has determined and announced its position. It rejects self-rule and participation in self-rule elections. It calls on the Palestinian people to boycott, by peaceful means, these elections. This is the Hamas position. It remains unchanged. What was attributed to Shaykh Ahmad Yasin [Hamas founder, now in Israeli jails] has already been clarified. Shaykh Yasin was talking about a legislative council representing the Palestinian people inside and outside. This is different from the executive council, which is considered one of the self-rule mechanisms.

Algeria

Foreign Minister on Terrorism, National Dialogue

NC2212112793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0950 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Algiers, 22 Dec (MENA)—Algerian Foreign Minister Mohamed Salah Dembri has said that the terrorist groups in Algeria were trying to achieve power through their recent terrorist acts, in which innocent citizens and foreigners were killed.

He said the Algerian Government has accurate information about the source of weapons possessed by those groups. The government will strongly confront those terrorists, and the national will of the Algerian people will ultimately triumph, he said.

In an exclusive statement to a MENA correspondent in Algiers, the foreign minister said violence practiced by the terrorist groups is unacceptable as a means to attain power. He called on the Arab countries to commit themselves to democratic systems whereby opposing views are respected. He said elements of national identity should be kept away from political controversy, and everything leading our peoples toward further progress and prosperity must be adhered to.

The Algerian minister refused to identify the states that finance the terrorist groups in Algeria or provide them with weapons. He said the government has all the details about many of the terrorist acts.

On the national dialogue seminar that will be held in Algeria on 25 January to end the current tension in the country, the foreign minister said that all political forces are participating in the seminar with a view to achieving national unanimity on the future of Algerian society.

He said the seminar will seek to preserve the foundations and principles in which the Algerian people believe so as to end the current situation and remove all forms of political controversy, which does not serve the country at this stage.

He expressed belief that the seminar will succeed, noting that all the political forces participating in it reject violence as a means to reach power, and reject deviation from the democratic principles. There is no room for political controversy in Algeria, especially when it comes to religion, language, or the unity of the homeland, he said.

On the recent border agreement with Tunisia, Dembri said the agreement was signed after 10 years of discussions. Describing it as "the last stone" in the problem, he said it was worked out at the level of the foreign and interior ministers of the two countries. He said the agreement should serve as a model for bilateral and even multilateral relations. [passage omitted]

Dembri: Algeria To Join Non-Proliferation Treaty

LD2112154593 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Algeria has announced today its intention of joining the international Non-Proliferation Treaty. This announcement came on the occasion of the inauguration of El-Salam nuclear reactor at Ain Oussera. More details with Ahmed Khida:

[Begin recording] [Khida] First, we stress that Foreign Affairs Minister Salah Dembri officially declared today in three languages Algeria's intention to join the international nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. He was third to speak at the inauguration ceremony of the diplomatic missions—which were all invited, and most of whom attended—and before international and national journalists.

[Dembri] Therefore, I officially announce today—in the name of the highest authorities in the country—our intention to join the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

[Khida] Therefore, after the El-Nour nuclear reactor in Algiers, with its weak one MW capacity, another nuclear reactor was officially inaugurated in Ain Oussera, Djelfa Province. It is called the El-Salam reactor and has a capacity of 15 thermal MW. The inauguration coincided with the 35th anniversary of establishing Algerian-Chinese relations in 1958. This reactor was the product of Chinese companies. The representatives stressed ongoing Algerian-Chinese cooperation and revealed that IAEA experts had visited the Ain Oussera nuclear reactor many times during the stages of its construction, and they had become convinced that this achievement was for purely peaceful purposes of research.

For his part, Algeria's Foreign Minister Dembri said that the El-Salam reactor had (?accepted) at the Algerian Government's request to meet the guarantees of the IAEA.

National Education Minister Ahmed Jebbar, who was the first to speak, stressed that the construction of the El-Salam nuclear reactor was a logical culmination of the considerable efforts exerted over 20 years in training, science, and technology.

Therefore, this new nuclear reactor is aimed at nuclear research, which has become a major component of all systems. The research to be carried out by this new reactor concerns the fields of medicine, X-ray treatment, and research development in the fields of agriculture and industry.

Finally, we record the absence of the general director of the IAEA, Mr. Hans Blix, who on this occasion sent a message to the Algerian Government in which he stressed his belief that this new achievement constitutes an important landmark in the development of nuclear research and control technology. [end recording]

Parties Agree To National Dialogue Council Date

LD2112175993 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0600 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Excerpts] As it is known, the Higher State Council [HCE] decided during its last meeting to extend the mandate of the HCE until the end of January 1994, and fixed the date of convening the national [dialogue] conference for the last week of the same month; national radio explored the positions of some political parties in this regard. [passage omitted]

This is what the representative of the Movement of the Islamic Society, Hamas, said on the movement's position.

[Begin unidentified HAMAS spokeman recording] First we in HAMAS note the obvious delay in taking the necessary measures to get the country out of the crises, returning to legitimacy in various state institutions, ending the bloodshed, and the waste of time and money. We highlighted this affair right after the presidential body became vacant after the resignation of the former president of the republic, when the country began to get into a vicious circle of illegitimacy. However, we have always said that discussing [ishrak] issues together is possible, provided all sides have a sincere will and intention.

Therefore, the postponement of the conference is in fact a natural result of various delays, either in the dialogue as a choice made by different bodies or in the setting up of the commission, the eight-man commission [National Dialogue Commission], as a follow-up body for the dialogue process. This delay is then in response to an exceptional necessity created by different sides. However, despite the response to this necessity, it should not in anyway be used to gain time and to deprive the dialogue of its value and contents. We hope that this time delay will be sufficient to unify all the parties, including the dissolved Islamic Salvation Front [FLN], the Socialist Forces Front, and others, in order to stop the bloodshed that the country is going through and return to legitimacy with the least cost, and as soon as possible. [end recording] [passage omitted]

[Announcer] However, yesterday afternoon a member of the National Dialogue Committee told the Algerian news agency that the date of holding the national dialogue conference during the last week of next January was fixed in agreement with the parties taking part in the dialogue. The same speaker pointed out that the chairman of the commission had in this regard received a representative of the Rally for Democracy and Culture and a representative of the FLN, both of whom gave their consent to the convening of the national conference on 25 and 26 January. The chairman of the commission said that the National Dialogue Commission was surprised at the statements of some parties, whose statements undermined the commission's credibility and work.

FLN Denies Part in Decision

LD2112211493 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] In the political sphere after the FLN [National Liberation Front] and the RCD [Rally for Democracy and Culture] announced their stands on the date for the national dialogue conference—and after the response to those positions by a member of the National Dialogue Commission yesterday—the war of words is still going strong.

The FLN still insists on its position. Today, it confirmed that it did not take part [yua'kid 'adam musharakhatihi] in setting a date for the national dialogue conference. That was reported in a lengthy statement by the party's secretary general, Abdelhamid Mehri.

For his part, RCD National Secretary Pasha denied any prior agreement by his party to set a date for the national conference.

The incompatibility of these statements proves that there are still some contradictions, despite the seriousness of this stage.

RCD Secretary Denies Accord

LD2112134793 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] The national secretary of the Rally for Democracy and Culture [RCD] has denied the existence of a prior agreement with his party on postponing the National Dialogue Conference as proposed by the National Dialogue Commission. In a statement, a copy of which was sent to APS, Mr. Mustapha Pasha confirmed that he has responded to an invitation by the chairman of the National Dialogue Commission, who pointed out to him that this was considered a personal and unofficial step.

The RCD national secretary added: I cannot in any way commit the RCD to any issue before discussing it. He pointed out that the statements by the National Dialogue Comission's member were either the result of a misunderstanding or a maneuver.

UGTA Rejects Plans for Rescheduling Debts

LD2212084493 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 0800 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] As far as negotiations with the IMF are concerned, the General Union of Algerian Workers [UGTA] has rejected, according to an UGTA statement, all plans under any name or shape for rescheduling foreign debts. The statement was issued following a two-day in-camera meeting of the UGTA National Secretariat.

The statement stated, inter alia, that linking Algeria's fate to international financial institutions will deepen the plight and poverty of citizens. It will greatly harm Algerian economic national reserves, it added.

UGTA Makes Political, Social, Economic Demands

LD2112212293 Algiers ENTV Television Network in Arabic 1900 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] An emergency meeting of the General Union of Algerian Workers [UGTA] Central Committee has studied the political, economic, and social developments and has evaluated contacts with the government. The following statement emerged from this meeting. Abdelkader Kharche reports:

[Kharche] On social matters, the UGTA is demanding that the government raise salaries, control prices, protect jobs, provide state housing and pensions, fight tax evasion, review the civil service law, and offer social security.

On economic matters, the memorandum demands the construction of 100,000 housing units a year within the framework of state housing, guarantees for educating the people, medical coverage for citizens with meager incomes, and the supply of widely consumed goods and stability for their prices in line with a price list drawn up after joint agreement between the government and the UGTA. It also demands special support for the construction and food industries during the next phase.

On political matters, the UGTA believes that a transitional period is necessary and its success is linked to achieving an actual break with the men, mentalities, policies, and mafia groups as well as with pressure groups rejected by the people.

Egypt

Mubarak Chairs NDP Meeting, Discusses Terrorism

NC2112154693 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1310 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Cairo, 21 Dec (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak stressed that the confrontation with terrorism will not be at the expense of disregarding or disrespecting the constitution, the supremacy of law, or of all the gains of freedom, democracy, and respect for all the citizens' rights to a safe and stable life.

The president said that our priorities are stability and confrontation with anything that threatens the country's security, and there is no laxity or dithering when it comes to protecting Egypt's security and stability. He added that this confrontation is an expression of a solid popular determination that denounces and rejects all forms of blind terrorism.

This was stated by Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif following today's meeting of the National Democratic Party [NDP] Political Bureau, which was chaired by President Mubarak.

He said that President Mubarak reviewed issues of national action at the domestic and foreign levels.

Safwat al-Sharif added that President Mubarak discussed economic reform issues from all its angles, the unemployment problem and how to handle it as a priority, the development of the slum areas, how to deal with population growth, and how to increase the rates of development and improve performance in the fields of education, health, and the services to the citizens so that they can catch up with the changes of the era.

The information minister went on to say that President Mubarak had stressed that the focus is on the Egyptian citizen and every action, performance, or reform should be with them in mind, that is, the citizen and the Egyptian family. The president added: This is the role of all the political parties, led by the NDP. Political action is not slogans but work for the sake of the homeland's sons and their interests.

President Mubarak dealt with foreign policy, Egypt's relations with the major powers, and Egypt's stand vis-a-vis the international political and economic issues in a new world order and new international economic ties that demand changes and challenges.

The president also detailed the facts of the Middle East peace process, Arab relations, the future of Arab action, and a number of topical issues.

The information minister said that President Mubarak also dealt with the NDP's role in the present and future stages, noting that national action to achieve development and democratic progress is the responsibility of the NDP since it is the majority party. The President then reviewed the party's stands since its establishment in the 1970's. [passage omitted]

Al-Sharif added that President Mubarak stressed that he will never forsake the trust placed in him by millions of Egyptians and that he has called for a national dialogue in the name of millions of citizens and for their sake. The president added that the national dialogue is for all the political, intellectual, and cultural forces and for the sake of the homeland's issues and future. The national dialogue must be isolated from any conflict or competition between any of the parties or any attempt to impose specific views. The president stressed that Egypt is above all the parties and that freedom, democracy, political pluralism, and economic reform have priority. Referring to the NDP's dialogue, cooperation, and coordination with the other parties, the president said the points of agreement are more numerous than the differences with the other parties. He added that the national dialogue should rise above all transient differences and should discuss the issues with an objective national conscience. He said that all party members, thinkers, politicians, intellectuals, and specialists involved in the national dialogue should take the interests of millions of Egyptians into account.

The information minister said that the NDP Political Bureau approved the working paper on the national dialogue. The paper explains that the dialogue stems from a stable political, constitutional, legislative, and historic

reality and the aim is to entrench firm principles and to improve development and modernization in all issues of national scope. He added that the NDP Secretariat General will start meetings with the leaders of other parties to draw up the complete concept for starting the dialogue, its deliberations, and various committees.

The Political Bureau approved the formation of the party's Secretariat General with Yusuf Wali as secretary general and Safwat al-Sharif and Kamal al-Shadhili as assistant secretaries general.

Mubarak Forms Political Bureau

NC1912115493 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 1100 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] President Muhammad Husni Mubarak, in his capacity as the leader of the National Democratic Party [NDP], has issued a decree forming the NDP Political Bureau. The following is the text of the decree:

The NDP Political Bureau is to be formed under our chairmanship and with the membership of: [Prime Minister] Dr. 'Atif Sidqi, [People's Assembly Speaker] Dr. Ahmad Fathi Surur, Dr. Mustafa Kamal Hilmi, Dr. Mustafa Khalil, Dr. Yusuf Wali, Fikri Makram 'Ubayd, Dr. Amal 'Uthman, Muhammad Sawfat al-Sharif, Kamal Muhammad al-Shadhili, Dr. Ibrahim Badran, Dr. Ahmad Haykal, Kamal Henry Abadir, and Dr. 'Abd-al-Salam 'Abd-al-Ghaffar.

Secretariat General Members Named

NC2112163993 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1442 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 21 Dec (MENA)—Kamal al-Shadhili, assistant secretary general of the National Democratic Party [NDP], has said that Party leader President Husni Mubarak's decision to form a secretariat general includes the formation of the party's central, specialized committees and the formation of the secretariat general in Cairo, Alexandria, and al-Jizah.

In a statement today, al-Shadhili said the decision on forming the secretariat general includes the appointment of Dr. Yusuf Wali as secretary general, Safwat al-Sharif as assistant secretary and secretary for information, and Kamal al-Shadhili as assistant secretary general and secretary for organization.

Al-Shadhili added that the NDP Secretariat General is made up of 30 members. They are: Dr.Mamduh Jabr, secretary for professionals; Dr. Farkhandah Hasan, secretary for women; Sayyid Rashid, secretary for workers; Mahmud Gharib, secretary for the peasantry; Zaki 'Abd-al-Hadi, secretary for tradesmen; and Dr. Nabil al-'Alqami, secretary for youths.

The party's secretariat general also includes as members: Dr. Mahmud Sharif, Dr. Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub, Dr. Husayn Kamil Baha'-al-Din, Dr. Mahir Mahran, Dr. Mamduh al-Biltaji, Dr. Muhammad Zaki Abu-'Amir, Ahmad al-'Amawi, Dr. Zakariya 'Azmi, Ahmad Nuh, Dr. Muhammad 'Abdallah, Tawfiq 'Abduh Isma'il, Dr. 'Abd-al-Rahim Bayyumi, Dr. Ibrahim Kamil Abu-al-'Aynayn, Counselor Edward Ghali, Sa'd-al-Din Wahbah, 'Abd-al-'Al al-Jarihi, Muhammad Rajab, Mustafa Sulayman, Dr. Fawziyah 'Abd-al-Sattar, Mrs. 'A'ishah 'Abd-al-Hadi, and Ahmad Wafi.

Eighteen new members join the NDP Secretariat General. They are Dr. Farkhandah Hasan, Sayyid Rashid, Dr. Nabil al-'Alqami, Dr. Muhammad 'Ali Mahjub, Dr. Husayn Kamil Baha'-al-Din, Dr. Mahir Mahran, Dr. Mamduh al-Biltaji, Dr. Muhammad Zaki Abu-'Amir, and Dr. Zakariya 'Azmi. The new members also include Ahmad Nuh, Dr. Ibrahim Kamil abu-al-'Aynayn, Counselor Edward Ghali, Sa'd-al-Din Wahbah, 'Abd-al-'Al al-Jarihi, Muhammad Rajab, Mustafa Sulayman, Dr. Fawziyah 'Abd-al-Sattar, and Mrs. 'A'ishah 'Abd-al-Hadi.

Interior Minister Interviewed on Terrorism

NC2012201093 Cairo AL-MUSAWWAR in Arabic 17 Dec 93 pp 14-19, 79

[Interview with Interior Minister Major General Hasan al-Alfi by unidentified correspondents in Cairo; date not given]

[Excerpts] [AL-MUSAWWAR] To begin with, we would like to point out that the arrest of suspects for the assassination attempt against Dr. 'Atif Sidqi and the subsequent capture of the Assassination Group were milestones in the fierce battle by the security forces against terror. All signs indicate that the security forces are in control of the situation and have regained the initiative. But their successes should not overshadow the fact that certain organizations are still active on Egyptian streets and that the need to stamp out terrorism is as strong as ever. The abundance of terrorist organizations and the many names under which they operate prompt us to ask the interior minister to clarify the situation. How serious is it and how long will it last? What links exist among terrorist organizations? Is there a common terrorist scheme that brings these groups together? How do you see the map of terror in Egypt?

[Al-Alfi] Concerning terror, I would like to state that extremism is a phenomenon that has been known throughout history, since the time of the Caliphs and the Khawarij [early Shiite dissidents]. In the 1920's, a surge of extremism was spearheaded by the Muslim Brotherhood, whose military wing carried out several assassinations. In other words, what is happening now is more of a normal process than an exceptional phenomenon.

The second thing I would like to say is that the surge of fundamentalism is very noticeable not just in Egypt but in neighboring countries. Terrorism took hold in these countries first and then spread to Egypt.

Third, the origin of extremism and terror is the same. We have several groups and factions active in this field. They

are racked by differences and suffer from successive divisions because of quarrels over leadership, finance, and personal interests.

The main groups are: The Islamic Group, al-Jihad, the Vanguards of Conquest, and Those Delivered from the Fire. Every once in a while a group breaks away from a larger one and takes a new name.

Extremism is alien to our society. Religion in Egypt has always been moderate.

There is no doubt that there are quarters financing these groups with the aim of causing disruption and instability in our country. I would like to state that at present we have sufficient information about these organizations. We use scientific methods and high-tech equipment, and are upgrading the training of our forces. As a result, we have accumulated a large amount of information, which leads us to two conclusions:

First: There are people financing these operations from abroad. We know the names of the parties and individuals involved in this process.

Second: The elements undertaking these operations at home are 100-percent Egyptian.

I would like to state that we have arrested all the culprits in the recent attacks, starting from the attempt to assassinate Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif and ending with the recent attack against Dr. 'Atif Sidqi.

The security organs are proud to say that the arrest of the culprits took place based on convincing evidence—documents, ammunition, and weapons were seized. Some of these cases are already in court and others are awaiting their turn. In all these cases we are cooperating closely with the judiciary and the prosecutor's office. We involve these organs in every step we take so as to avoid being accused of falsifying evidence or distorting facts.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Regarding your remarks on recent issues, some of the culprits involved in the attempt to assassinate you were killed during the attempt. Have the rest of the culprits been arrested?

[Al-Alfi] A third defendant was detained, but he died after his arrest. As you know, two others were killed during the attack. Other individuals have been identified and are being hunted down. The time has not come to disclose details. Today (last Wednesday) we will announce the names of the 15-member assassination squad. They have been detained, and documents and complete plans in their possession were seized in an operation under the supervision of the Prosecution Office. [passage omitted]

[AL-MUSAWWAR] You have detained the 15-member assassination squad. Can we say that the group that planted explosives in the al-Haram underpass, Shubra, al-Azbakiyah, and Madinat al-Nasr are still at large? Is there a relationship between this group and the 15-member assassination squad that has been detained?

[Al-Alfi] I believe that there are several groups specializing in all forms of terror. There is an assassination group, another group for planting explosives, and another for other forms of terror. They all receive training in camps abroad that are well known to us. The group that was recently detained is responsible for the al-Azbakiyah and Madinat al-Nasr blasts. We have confessions and we have documented information. Certain incidents are under investigation. [passage omitted]

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Even if you believe that remote-controlled explosives are not worrying, are you not worried about the name list of personalities targeted for assassination possessed by these groups. Does this mean further killing, explosions, and destruction?

[Al-Alfi] These plans are aimed at embarrassing the security agency, creating instability, and shaking security. This is clear from the latest incident, when these groups parked a car-bomb in front of a primary school. These people do not target anyone in particular, but simply seek to destabilize the country. Otherwise how can we explain the al-Azbakiyah car-bomb incident, which left three young brothers dead? These groups seek to kill for the sake of killing. They are agents, hirelings, and terrorists who seek to destabilize Egypt in the name of Islam.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Available information affirms that the attempt to assassinate Dr. 'Atif Sidqi was not the only operation by this organization and that they planned other assassinations. Could you tell us something about these operations that were foiled?

[Al-Alfi] I can say that this group had plans to assassinate a number of people and to plant explosives in certain places. These plans are being investigated.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] What is the story of the Fiat car that was seized on Faysal Street?

[Al-Alfi] This car was being prepared to assassinate another personality last Friday. The culprits have been detained and the car was seized before the crime was committed. The car had not yet been rigged, but preparations were being made to rig it up. There are full confessions about this specific incident.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] The last operation brings into sharper focus the relations between the internal and external parties. It is clear that the planning and the assignments are done abroad. What is more serious is that the financing also comes from abroad. How do the contacts take place and who is financing these operations? And is Egypt's security arm too short to reach a group of terrorists abroad who are causing all these problems at home?

[Al-Alfi] There is no doubt that there are relations between the inside and the outside groups. Inside, they receive the assignments and the financing. Lately, $40,000 and 30,000 Egyptian pounds intended to be used in buying cars for explosions and assassinations

have been seized. This means that the financing comes from abroad, from individuals in some Asian, African, and European countries. There are also training camps abroad. The contacts are made by fax and telephone and also during the travel of the perpetrators themselves. The methods of financing are known. They collect donations on behalf of the Islamic centers located in Europe, the United States, and around the world for Bosnia-Herzegovina, zakat [alms paid by Muslims under Islamic law], and other issues. All these funds are earmarked for these operations.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] What about the training camps abroad?

[Al-Alfi] There are countries that house several training camps, and these individuals reside there and make contacts. Some of these individuals travel around some of the African states and correspond with the London papers and even some of the papers here, as was the case when one of the papers recently published an interview with Ayman al-Zawahiri. It was a page full of confessions in which he stated that a new crime would take place within a few days; and this was the one against the prime minister.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Do you now know the precise locations of the external leaders?

[Al-Alfi] Yes, very accurately. They are very well known to us.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] All that is being published and reported focuses on Ayman al-Zawahiri. Is there nobody else abroad or are there shortcomings in our follow-ups?

[Al-Alfi] There are others beside al-Zawahiri. There are a number of fugitives abroad. These fugitives are not his assistants; each represents his own person and claims to be a hero, so much so that following the assassination attempt against me each claimed responsibility for the incident, which led to a disagreement among them about who was responsible.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] If the leaders abroad are known precisely and their locations are monitored, why don't we make representations to those countries to hand them over to be tried here?

[Al-Alfi] We hope those states will take a positive stand, particularly since we have lists of the names of these people and the places they go to. They even have their own printing presses to forge identity cards and passports. Each of them carries one or more forged identity cards and assumes more than one name. They travel around countries in Europe, Africa, and Asia. These countries did not feel the danger from these persons in the past, but lately they have started to be concerned. When they started to feel that these people pose a threat to them too, they started to assist us with information and in other ways. Some of these countries even started to chase them.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] If Pakistan is currently trying to expel them, the conflict among the rival factions in Afghanistan provide these groups with an opportunity to train in Golboddin Hekmatyar's camps. Thus, camps and support are available. There are reports on attempts to arrest them and that security delegations have travelled there to arrest them. Is there any truth to these reports?

[Al-Alfi] There are attempts in this respect; and we hope that our dealings with the brothers in Afghanistan will succeed.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] After President Rabbani's visit to Cairo, we expected good news about controlling these groups in Afghanistan. What has happened?

[Al-Alfi] We hope efforts will succeed, but there are other factors affecting the situation in Afghanistan. We hope that the agreement reached in Cairo will be implemented.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] What about Sudan, particularly since Foreign Ministry Under Secretary Dr. Usamah al-Baz stressed that Sudan is being accused and that terrorists have been detained at the border?

[Al-Alfi] There are camps and individuals there. A conference was convened there a week ago and was attended by several al-Jihad Organization leaders abroad along with the Islamic Group leaders.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] We are still unable to learn about the real situation in Upper Egypt. You said that you are for refraining from the policy of advance deterrence and that the door is open for new opportunities for any individual who gives up terrorism. You cancelled certain security policies used previously. We expected these new policies to give good results, but on the contrary, violence has increased, the assassination of plainclothes detectives is increasing, and the number of assassinated detectives reached 46 at the beginning of this week. Their insistence on escalating the situation is clear. The Islamic Group's manifesto is hung on the walls of the al-Rahmah Mosque in the heart of Asyut. It is said that they kill strangers [Ghuraba']. Our eschewing of a policy of preventive deterrence is behind this escalation of the situation and has given these groups an opportunity to step up their worrisome activity. What is going on in the center of Upper Egypt?

[Al-Alfi] Regarding the al-Rahmah Mosque, more than 200 extremists were detained there this week. We refuse to permit any terrorist or outlaw take refuge in a mosque. Regrettably, Upper Egypt is characterized by a particular custom: No citizen there offers to testify, unlike in Cairo and other central areas where people are increasingly coming to help the security agencies. The situation is not the same in Upper Egypt. In addition, the people in Upper Egypt are used to vendettas and crimes. The logic of giving testimony is out of the question there because a witness does not want to get involved in a life-long vendetta. It is rare for a witness to give testimony on a

certain incident. However, I would like to reassure you that strict security measures have recently been taken and that a large number of people involved in recent incidents have been detained. These incidents are isolated and these people are absolutely not in control. What is the significance of a terrorist killing a plain-clothes policeman returning home from duty? These are unplanned, desperate incidents and are not serious. They can do nothing to affect security in Upper Egypt, tourism, or any establishment or public figure. We are confronting them day and night in all areas. We will continue our work and we are not in a rush.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Is there a security plan for dealing with the situation in South Egypt?

[Al-Alfi] We have a plan and a strategy. God willing, we are standing firm and will step up our efforts further. [passage omitted]

[AL-MUSAWWAR] The troubles have suddenly moved from Asyut to Luxor and Aswan. What is going on in these once peaceful governorates?

[Al-Alfi] There is a network of communications among the extremists. Once they find security tightening in one area they move on to another. They are trying to make their presence felt in other places than Asyut.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Is there a vendetta between the police and the locals, for example between al-Humaydat clan in Qina and the security forces?

[Al-Alfi] There is no vendetta between the police and the locals. I worked for four years in Asyut and Sawhaj. There is no such vendetta.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Do not certain families support extremism?

[Al-Alfi] No.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Where is the [National Democratic] Party [NDP]? What political efforts is it exerting? And, how about the opposition parties?

[Al-Alfi] Ask me where the police are and I will tell you. But the NDP and the opposition parties should answer for themselves. That is their responsibility.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Why do you not comb the entire south?

[Al-Alfi] Many favor such a move. But others, including the Human Rights Organization, oppose it. I have to weigh both positions and take steps in accordance with the information I have and in a legal manner that befits Egypt's international image.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] It was said that inadequate police training is behind the incidents in the south?

[Al-Alfi] The staff working in the south have received advanced training. Unfortunately, there are occasional errors and some laxity.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] The behavior of some of the security officials could aggravate the situation. For instance, we have stumbled upon a letter by the new Asyut security chief in which he calls on the local NDP official to organize armed groups from the NDP in order to fight terrorists.

[Al-Alfi] Such an approach is completely wrong-minded. The public is required to help the police by volunteering information and supplying evidence. This is even their religious duty. Officials should inform the public of the danger posed by terrorism. The letter to which you refer does not exist. The security chief told me that he did not write any such thing. [passage omitted]

[AL-MUSAWWAR] All these operations require massive funding for the extremists, considering that they are using weapons, explosives, forged passports, and sometimes plastic surgery. How do they get all this money?

[Al-Alfi] Certain quarters send them funds from abroad. They maintain links. Efforts are being made in all capitals to raise funds.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] How about reports that the Muslim Brotherhood finances the extremists and possibly has organizational links with them?

[Al-Alfi] I would like to reassure everyone that we have knowledge of this, but I do not wish to divulge secrets. We know all about the extremists' contacts at home and abroad.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Does the financing come from an institution, individuals, countries, or governments?

[Al-Alfi] So far, the financing comes from individuals in some countries, but not from specific countries.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Has any financing link been established between these people and Western intelligence services, or, to be specific, Israel?

[Al-Alfi] Nothing of the sort has been proved so far. Let me be frank with you. The people who carry out these operations are Egyptian. The ones who finance them from abroad are Egyptian, and the ones who plan them are Egyptian. So why should we search for other governments or countries to blame for this while all the perpetrators are among us?

[AL-MUSAWWAR] We notice reluctance by the police to confront the slogans inciting terrorism and extremism that are raised publicly in the streets.

[Al-Alfi] The police are working hard and making great efforts. It is the duty of citizens to report any information they have to the security agencies. Where are the public and the popular bodies? The consequences of this will affect everybody economically, and therefore, we must all stand up to them. Anybody may contact the police in a confidential manner, and we will absolutely

not publicize their names. There are rewards of up to 100,000 pounds for whoever gives information about these people.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Related to the slogan issue is a group of preachers who use the pulpits in the mosques to promote extremist ideas and who support these people.

[Al-Alfi] Support is not confined to some preachers and religious men. The support also comes from inside and outside the country. The groups that engage in terrorism are not Islamic groups, but infidel groups. Whoever supports them is an enemy of Islam.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] What about the millions of extremist tapes and books that are all over the sidewalks?

[Al-Alfi] We have seized millions of these tapes, and we have mounted constant and daily campaigns in this regard. But it is not possible for policemen to check every alley. The citizens must help us and inform us of things like this.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] What about the donations being collected in the streets?

[Al-Alfi] We are after them. Donations must be collected by special permit only.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] How do you expect the citizens to help you, when people are being mistreated at police stations?

[Al-Alfi] I fully believe in cooperation between the police and the people, and I believe that people must feel that the police are completely at their service. Police work is not just a job, it is a message. I do not wait for citizens to complain to send an inspection team. Sometimes, I even send personal friends from outside the police force to police stations to make phony complaints to see how cooperative the policemen are with the public. I want the people to like the police. We will not succeed without the people. There have been some excesses recently, and we are dealing with them firmly. I believe in reward and punishment; generous rewards and deterrent punishments. This is God's law on earth. [passage omitted]

[AL-MUSAWWAR] The overcrowding at prisons portends an explosion. The maltreatment and lack of funds have made Egypt and the Interior Ministry the subject of remarks by Amnesty International.

[Al-Alfi] There are some old prisons that were supposed to be renovated and modernized. There is a plan to build new prisons. The plan started with the building of a high-security prison (al-'Aqrab) in Turrah, which already has inmates. The rest will be built in the coming months. [passage omitted]

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Are international organizations given ample opportunities to examine cases in Egypt?

[Al-Alfi] Yes, but there is a general plan to distort Egypt's image. They only listen to the aggrieved terrorists and forget about the role of security. Their sole aim is to distort.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Several research centers in the West believe that terrorism in Egypt is primarily due to social protest against erroneous policies. These centers maintain that they sent delegations to the Interior Ministry to study and debate this aspect.

[Al-Alfi] No one has contacted us.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] What about human rights reports?

[Al-Alfi] They only consider the negative aspects. No one, not even the government newspapers, refers to the positive developments. [passage omitted]

[AL-MUSAWWAR] It has been noticed that whenever a terrorist organization's den is discovered there is an Army regiment or training camp near it. This occurred in al-Ma'sarah, al-Wayliyah, and al-Jabal al-Asfar. Is there a connection between these camps and the terrorists? For instance, do they get arms from these camps and is there coordination between them?

[Al-Alfi] There is complete coordination between us and the Army on this issue and there is absolutely no connection between these dens and the Army camps.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] So how do the terrorists get their arms?

[Al-Alfi] To date we do not know exactly the source of this huge quantity of arms and dynamite. It is said that arms are still being smuggled through certain Army camps, and it is also said that the terrorists steal dynamite from explosives depots in quarries or that these arms are left over from previous wars. What is the truth?

[AL-MUSAWWAR] We are asking you the truth. For your information, a large portion of these arms are left over from the Sinai wars. Some weapons and dynamite are also stolen from factories and quarries and others are smuggled across the borders.

[Al-Alfi] We are carefully watching plants, quarries, and the borders. All Egyptian border points are under control as well as the use of explosives in quarries, because we discovered that certain quarries use part of their explosives and smuggle the rest to terrorists.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Reports have recently been published that there are joint training exercises between the Army and the police. Is this true; is it part of improving police performance?

[Al-Alfi] There are constant joint training exercises in many Army, military police, and shock troop units, and other units.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] Coordination between the two groups are understandable, but why joint training?

[Al-Alfi] It is not joint training, but certain police groups get certain training in Army units.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] The projectile that hit a residential building block in the al-Imam al-Shafi'i area two weeks ago raised deep concern among the people. Was it a stray projectile from an Army unit or did terrorists fire it as part of their attempt to accelerate their performance and operations?

[Al-Alfi] The projectile has nothing to do with terrorism; it strayed from an Army training exercise.

[AL-MUSAWWAR] What is the significance of the presence of Army personnel in affected areas, particularly in light of reports that certain Army units are deployed in the streets to help the police?

[Al-Alfi] These are military police personnel used to keep law and order in areas where incidents occur. This is an old measure; it is not new. [passage omitted]

Diplomats To Seek Extraditions From 4 States

NC2112171993 Beirut AL-SAFIR in Arabic 18 Dec 93 p 12

['Amr Nasif report from Cairo]

[Text] Four joint security-diplomatic working teams will leave today for Afghanistan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, and Switzerland to deliver to officials there the complete files on some leaders of the Egyptian Islamic groups and to ask for their extradition to Egypt.

Sources in Cairo have told AL-SAFIR that these teams were recently formed with extreme care and after analyzing the detailed confessions made by a number of Islamists who were recently arrested and the information obtained by the state security intelligence service.

These teams will hand officials in these four countries official Egyptian requests for extradition of the wanted elements, either in implementation of agreements on security cooperation or through diplomatic ties.

The sources told AL-SAFIR that the teams' members will supply as evidence a number of telephone calls, faxed messages, and letters as part of the evidence of the wanted elements' involvement in terrorist operations that were planned abroad—where these Islamists are residing—and that also were financed through banks in these countries.

An Egyptian Interior Ministry source confirmed that the team scheduled to travel to Saudi Arabia was formed under the supervision of the highest political authorities in Egypt and is charged with trying to counter apparent Saudi distrust. This comes from their tendency to believe that Egypt is turning a blind eye to many grave insults to them in some Egyptian publications—such as AL-'ARABI, the mouthpiece of the Arab Democratic Nasirite Party; AL-AHALI, the mouthpiece of the National Progressive Unionist Grouping Party; and ROSE AL-YUSUF magazine—which write that some members of the Saudi royal family are involved in sponsoring and financing some of the Islamic groups, helping them to carry out operations, and providing protection for them. This is in addition to what these publications write about Saudi's exercising control of the Arab media through financing and by influencing senior correspondents and writers in the region.

Report: Egyptian 'Terrorists' Train in Iran

NC2112213993 Cairo AL-WAFD in Arabic 17 Dec 93 p 1

[Report by 'Abd-al-Nabi 'Abd-al-Sattar]

[Text] Egypt recently received a grave report from an Arab country asserting that Egyptian and other Arab terrorists can be found in Iran. The report includes full lists of Arab extremists who receive military training and indoctrination in Khomeynite ideology in the Iranian city of Mashhad.

The report says that there are 900 Arab extremists in Iran and that they are mostly Palestinians, Algerians, Egyptians, Tunisians, and Gulf nationals.

The Arab country that prepared the report has delivered copies of it to most Arab countries.

Egypt has rejected all mediation attempts with Iran and refuses to let any new meetings between Egyptian and Iranian officials be arranged. Cairo has requested that Syrian and Lebanese mediation between it and Iran be halted for the time being in view of Iran's continued support for Egyptian extremists and its refusal to honor its pledge to halt anti-Egyptian media campaigns.

'Abd-al-Rahman Group Trial Adjourned Until 8 Jan

NC2112181893 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1705 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 21 Dec (MENA)—The Higher State Security Court-Emergency has decided to postpone the trial of 48 suspects in the al-Fayyum demonstrations, led by Dr. 'Umar 'Abd-al-Rahman, to 8 January to hear a statement from the defense.

The court decided to refer suspects Sayyid 'Ali 'Abd-al-'Aziz and Muhammad Ahmad 'Abd-al-Mun'im to the (?prison's hospital) and continue the protective detention of all other suspects pending an investigation.

The prosecution completed its presentations in the case today, and 'Abd-al-Sami' Sharaf-al-Din, attorney general of the Higher State Security Prosecution, demanded the strongest sentence for the suspects.

Chief Prosecutor Usamah Qandil asked that the testimony of defense witness Mamduh 'Ali Yusuf be regarded as evidential only. This statement is invalid under the law because Yusuf was previously sentenced on criminal charges in the al-Jihad Organization case, thus he is not allowed to testify.

The defense lawyers demanded that the suspects be released on the condition that they are obligated to attend future hearings, but Chief Prosecutor Qandil objected to the release request. He argued that the court had already tried the suspects while they were at-large, and they did not attend the hearings.

Two Security Guards Killed in Asyut

NC2012191593 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1855 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Asyut, 20 Dec (MENA)—Two security guards, Hasan Muhammad and Mustafa Ibrahim Farghali, were shot dead in the village of al-Shagbabh in Asyut in Upper Egypt today. The culprits seized their rifles and fled.

Security forces have begun an investigation of the incident.

Participant Defends Khartoum Conference

NC1712190893 Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 14 Dec 93 p 5

[Article by Mustafa Mashhur: "The Popular Conference; There Are Pains, Yet They Revive Hope"]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] I experienced mixed feelings of pain and hope a few days ago during the Popular Conference held in Khartoum [concluding on 7 December], where representatives of most, if not all, of the rising Islamic movements in the Islamic world met. Representatives of such hot Islamic issues as Palestine, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Tajikistan, Kashmir, India, Burma, Somalia, and others attended the conference, along with representatives of minorities suffering from persecution, oppression, and displacement.

I attended the first constituent meeting of the conference three years ago. A few days before the convening of that conference, I read with astonishment a headline in AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT saying: "Extremists From Several Countries Meet in Khartoum." The fact is that I did not feel anything extremist, either at the first conference or this conference. But what can we say about the malicious writers and the policy of distortion and deception that accuse Islam of being extremist and terrorist when in fact it is a religion of peace, justice, and compassion? A war is being waged against Islamic fundamentalism by the Zionist enemy, and the crusading West is carrying its banner in this war, and some leaders of our countries have gone along with them.

The Palestine question topped the agenda of the conference. The conferees were pained by what the PLO, which claims to be the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinians, has done and how it has surrendered all of Palestine. It even volunteered to turn the Gaza-Jericho area into a new security belt and to act like another Lahd army [South Lebanese Army] in Lebanon. But hope was revived in our souls by what we heard from the representatives of Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] and other factions opposed to this agreement and by what we sensed from all the conferees in terms of their rejection of the agreement, their commitment to the continuation of the intifadah, the boycott, rejection of normalization with the Zionist enemy, and even their desire to participate in the jihad against the enemy until all Palestine is cleansed of the sons of Zion. [passage omitted]

After reading Ibrahim Nafi's article published in AL-AHRAM on Friday, I would like to state that none of the reliable news agencies or the Egyptian papers have reported the remarks attributed to Dr. Hasan al-Turabi.

[In an article entitled "Leader al-Turabi's Dreams and Illusions, and the Inferiority Complex Toward Egypt" published on pages 1 and 3 of AL-AHRAM dated 10 December, AL-AHRAM Chief Editor Ibrahim Nafi' comments on Hasan al-Turabi's remarks to an unspecified French newspaper. According to Nafi', al-Turabi noted that "Since its independence, Sudan has been in Egypt's orbit. But now it is the Egyptian people who want to follow the Islamic path walked by Sudan. And this is what is disturbing the Pharaoic and undemocratic government of Egypt." After refuting al-Turabi's claims, Nafi' adds: "When asked about accusations that Sudan is sheltering terrorist organizations, al-Turabi denied the charge and added: There are no more than 500 Egyptians, 150 Tunisians, and five Algerians here. As for those who previously fought in Afghanistan and now live in Sudan, their number certainly does not exceed 100 persons." Nafi' criticizes al-Turabi for sanctioning the murders of foreigners in Algeria, "because this is a type of resistance or revolution that must involve victims", as he put it.]

Another fact is that during the sessions of the conference and in our meetings with the Sudanese leaders, including Lieutenant General 'Umar al-Bashir, his ministers, and Dr. Hasan al-Turabi, we heard only good words of appreciation about Egypt, and we would not have accepted anything else. This is because it is our firm tradition that regardless of the nature of our relations with the Egyptian government, when we are abroad we do not listen to anything but words of amity and respect for the Egyptian authorities and those in charge of them and we stand firmly against anyone who tries to insult them. Nafi' mentioned that the conference provided cover for terrorist movements. We say that a conference attended by hundreds of reasonable and mature key figures from all over the world who work in broad daylight cannot be described as terrorist or extremist. And why do the governments restrict the activity of Islamic movements, particularly since the president of the republic has admitted that some of them are reasonable and mature movements that have opted for a peaceful political line? Why don't the governments allow the mature Islamic movements to act freely, and they, God willing, will be able to fill the vacuum and take the lead?

Nobody claims that the conference solved the problems of the Islamic world, but it was a step along a road that needs to be followed by other steps. It all starts with getting Muslims to understand the affairs of their fellow

Muslims and see how they can help them, since the Muslims constitute one nation and even one body. This should be followed by calling for a return to God's path and the elimination of differences among Muslims, which the enemies helped to instigate. After that, efforts should be made to apply God's shari'ah and call on rulers to grant freedoms, call free elections truly representative of the peoples, and recommend preparations for a jihad against the enemies of Islam, following the path of Prophet Muhammad, may peace be upon him, and his companions until the promised victory is achieved.

In conclusion, we must inspire hope that the future belongs to Islam. De,pite the long night of injustice and darkness, dawn and daybreak must follow to dissipate the darkness and injustice.

Cypriot Foreign Minister Comments on Talks

NC2112131493 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1130 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, 21 Dec (MENA)—Cypriot Foreign Minister Alekos Mikhailidhis has said that President Husni Mubarak expressed particular interest in the Cyprus issue and stressed Egypt's support for a permanent solution.

He told MENA in an exclusive statement that his fruitful and constructive meeting with the president yesterday discussed issues relating to the Middle East peace process and future cooperation among the Mediterranean states in light of international changes.

He said his talks with Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa emphasized the importance of promoting bilateral cooperation and strengthening relations politically and economically, especially after the signing of an agreement canceling double taxation.

It was agreed, he said, that the Cypriot industry minister will visit Egypt soon at the head of a group of Cypriot businessmen to discuss launching joint ventures and expanding the scope of cooperation, especially on economy and tourism. President Mubarak encouraged this cooperation, he added.

Mikhailidhis said the talks also centered on the importance of unifying efforts to solve the Cyprus issue.

He described the recent Security Council Resolution 889 on the Cyprus issue as one of the most important Security Council resolutions. He noted that it says the status quo can't continue and warns that the Security Council will take alternative measures to implement its old resolutions. It also asks friendly countries to urge Turkey to find a swift solution to the problem and cooperate with the UN secretary general.

He said Turkey recently showed some positive understanding and asked Turkish Cypriot leaders to create a suitable climate for additional positive steps.

He said that as well as the Security Council interest, it is important for the other parties to accept the philosophy of the resolution and the confidence-building measures. There is no need to close the door on decisive decisions, he said.

Mikhailidhis said Cyprus' membership of the EC will not change its geographic position as member of the Nonaligned Movement. Our joining the EC, he explained, will serve as a bridge between the two groups. He said Cyprus already has customs agreements with the EC and is seeking full membership.

On the Greek defense force, the minister explained: We must not forget the situation in Cyprus. There are 40,000 Turkish soldiers in the occupied territory and only several thousand police guards on the Greek Cypriot side, 6,000 of which are completing their compulsory military service. The idea of the Greek defense force is that if the Turkish forces advance from their current positions, the Greek forces will move.

We must think logically of disarming the island and leaving the monitoring mission to the international peacekeeping force, he said.

Privatization Ruled Out for Military Industry

NC1912063693 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0435 GMT 19 Dec 93

[From the press review]

[Text] The newspaper AL-JUMHURIYAH today cites Dr. Muhammad al-Ghamrawi, minister of state for war production, as saying that privatization is out of the question as far as military production is concerned. Military production, he added, is a cornerstone of national security, and the state provides it with the necessary investments.

Suez Canal Revenues Reach $1.961 Billion in 1993

NC1812160793 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1415 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Port Said, 18 Dec (MENA)—Revenues from the Suez Canal reached $1.961 billion this year, an increase of $70 million over last year.

Engineer Muhammad 'Izzat 'Adil, chairman of the Suez Canal Authority, said revenues for next year are expected to exceed $2 billion.

'Adil was speaking at a ceremony held at Port Fu'ad today to inaugurate the tugboat "Barakah 2," considered the biggest tugboat in the Middle East. It was built by Egyptian manpower at the Port Said dockyard.

Foreigners Allowed To Own Reinsurance Businesses

NC1812180293 Cairo MENA in English 1520 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] Cairo, Dec 18 (MENA)—The Higher Insurance Council has agreed to allow foreigners to set up reinsurance companies to be totally owned by them.

Foreigners will be allowed to possess 49 per cent of the capital of ordinary companies.

The Council approved amendments calling for raising the capital of government insurance companies from two million to 60 million pounds.

Sudan

Joint Committee Approves 3 Accords With Ethiopia

EA2112195093 Khartoum SUNA in English 1621 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Khartoum, 21 Dec (SUNA)—The economic subcommittee of the joint Ethiopian-Sudanese ministerial committee agreed on three commercial agreements between the two countries.

Abdullahi Ahmad Hasan, the finance minister, said that the economic committee discussed in its meeting on Tuesday [21 December] the agreement of dual taxation and control of customs evasions. Ahmad also said the economic committee would split into three committees to discuss the issues pertinent to energy, water resources, transport and tourism.

The social committee agreed to renew the previous agreements in the spheres of culture, education, information, sport, youth, relief and rehabilitation and social planning. It also agreed to set up a joint committee to follow up the implementation of protocols and agreements signed in this session. The social committee ended its sessions on Tuesday, when Abd al-Basit Sabdarat, the culture and information minister, chaired the Sudanese side and the Ethiopian side was headed by education minister, Miss Genet Zewde. The Ethiopian education minister expressed the conviction that these agreements will push the cooperation relations forward and will strengthen the deep-seated links, indicating that the horizons of cooperation between the two countries would serve the interests of the two peoples.

Rebel Commander Injured in Plane Crash

EA2112191593 Khartoum SUNA in English 1655 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Nairobi, 21 Dec (SUNA)—A Norwegian doctor died and four people were wounded when a small airplane crashed in Baringo district, northern Kenya on its way to Kakuma camp, which includes Sudanese refugees. The injured people in the incident were one of the rebel movement commanders, Salva Kiir Mayar Dit, the plane's owner Mesfin Makos, the British David Neil, and the Norwegian Audbild Henni.

The wounded people were employed by one of the international relief organizations working in southern Sudan. The airplane crashed against a mud house after one of its engines went out of order.

GCC Summit Resumes in Closed Session

LD2112122593 Riyadh SPA in Arabic 1055 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Riyadh, 21 Dec—The majesties and highnesses, the leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] states, held a second session in camera at the conference hall in al-Dar'iyyah Palace in Riyadh this afternoon under the chairmanship of King Fahd Bin-'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud, custodian of the two holy mosques, and in the presence of the participating official delegates.

Their majesties and highnesses are continuing their discussion of the issues listed in the agenda of the conference.

Saudi Minister Denies Differences Among Leaders

LD2212100193 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0830 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] Riyadh, 22 Dec (KUNA)—Saudi Foreign Affairs Minister Prince Sa'ud al-Faysal has denied that there are differences or contradictions in points of view over fundamental and sensitive issues during the current summit meeting of Gulf Cooperation Council [GCC] leaders.

In a statement to the local Saudi newspaper UKAZ, published here today, Prince Sa'ud, who presides over the GCC foreign ministers council, said there is complete agreement on the stance toward Iraq and Iran. He added that the general atmosphere in the summit is extremely positive. It embodies the higher spirit of responsibility that characterizes the leaders of this region and their aspirations to reach positive and effective decisions, strengthening the progress of work in the Gulf and consolidating its effectiveness, he stated.

Kuwait

UNIKOM: Iraqi Civilians Evacuate Territory

LD2012166493 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1243 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Text] Kuwait, 20 Dec (KUNA)—The spokesman for UNIKOM, the UN force monitoring the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border, indicated that 100 Iraqi families which were living on Kuwaiti territory have been evacuated into Iraqi territory.

In a telephone interview with the Kuwaiti news agency KUNA, UNIKOM spokesman 'Abd-al-Latif Qabbaj said that the situation in the demilitarized zone is calm and that no incidents or incursions have been reported there since 21 November. 'Abd-al-Latif Qabbaj said everything is going smoothly and that the evacuation operations will be completed at the end of this month. He added that the evacuation of Iraqi farms on Kuwaiti territory was supervised by UNIKOM observers.

UNIKOM sources last Wednesday said that the Iraqi civilians have begun evacuating the area of Um Qasr and that the Iraqi farmers living in the area of al-Abdali in northern Kuwait will be evacuated as soon as certain technical matters are completed.

It is worth mentioning that soldiers wearing civilian clothes made three incursions into Kuwaiti territory before 21 November and attacked UNIKOM and civilian workers who were digging the border trench.

Interior Minister Shaykh Ahmad al-Hammud al-Sabah told a Kuwaiti paper last Tuesday that the United Nations is responsible for putting pressure on the Iraqi regime to force it to implement all the UN resolutions.

The Kuwaiti interior minister also asked the UNIKOM force to be cautious and to be prepared for perfidious and treacherous attempts by the Iraqi regime.

Kuwaiti Interior Under Secretary Sulayman Majid al-Shahin said in a KUNA interview last Friday that Kuwait has adopted a cooperative stand regarding the demarcation of the border between Kuwait and Iraq and that it has made no concessions to Iraq. Al-Shahin thus denied the claims by some press reports that Kuwait made concessions to Iraq at the request of the United Nations.

It is worth mentioning that Iraq has not yet officially recognized the demarcation of its border with Kuwait.

ICRC Not Expecting Iraq To Release POWs

LD2212134393 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1143 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Kuwait, 22 Dec (KUNA)—The deputy director of the International Committee of the Red Cross [ICRC] in Kuwait today denied rumors about the return of Kuwaiti POWs to Kuwait tomorrow, Thursday. In a statement to KUNA, ICRC official Jean-Philippe Layoyer described press reports published today about this issue as being "untrue." He said "we do not expect any convoys to arrive these days, and we do not anticipate any return of prisoners at present." [passage omitted]

Layoyer pointed out that 14 civilians have already been handed over to Kuwait at 'Ar'ar on the Saudi border under the supervision of the ICRC. He said that the group included two men, three women, and nine children. He pointed out that this took place within the framework of the rehabilitation operation, i.e. those persons were in Iraq during the war for liberating Kuwait and could not leave for different reasons. Layoyer confirmed that the persons returned to the homeland were neither POWs nor detainees. He added that the ICRC has since March 1991 returned 5,727 people from Iraq to Kuwait.

The Iraqi regime is still holding more than 600 prisoners, including women and children, and refuses to free them.

Paper Says Iraq, Israel Negotiating on Pipeline

LD1912065993 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 0605 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Kuwait, 19 Dec (KUNA)—The Kuwaiti AL-RA'Y AL-AM' today quoted sources it described as "reliable" as saying that secret negotiations have for some time now been going on between the Iraqi regime and the Israeli Government to reach agreement on building a pipeline between Baghdad and the Israeli port of Eilat. The paper, in its issue published here, said that the Tel Aviv government has tempted the Iraqi regime with its ability to mediate with the United States to agree to a gradual lifting of the blockade imposed on it. The paper said that the length of the pipeline would be 900 kilometers long and will be built by an American company owned by persons known for their hatred for the Arabs. The paper quoted its own sources as saying that Amman has denied these reports, but all sources are reaffirming that Jewish businessmen will be financing the industrial projects and the natural gas pipeline to Israel under the slogan of the development of the Palestinian territory.

Heir Apparent on Strengthening Ties With Turkey

PM2112115493 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 19 Dec 93 p2

[Husayn 'Abd-al-Rahman report: "Message From Kuwaiti Heir Apparent to Ciller Aimed at Strengthening Ties With Turkey and Minimizing Its Losses"]

[Excerpt] Kuwait—'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Dakhil, Kuwaiti minister of state for cabinet affairs, emphasized yesterday that the purpose of his visit to Turkey was to strengthen ties between the two countries. He confirmed that he was carrying a message from Kuwaiti Heir Apparent and Prime Minister Shaykh Sa'd al-'Abdallah al-Sabah to Turkish Prime Minister Tansu Ciller. This visit is an attempt to block Baghdad's efforts to end Turkey's economic blockade against the Iraqi regime.

Al-Dakhil told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT that he would meet with Prime Minister Ciller to discuss new developments in the region and Kuwaiti-Turkish relations and deliver the heir apparent's message.

The Kuwaiti minister declined to disclose the contents of the message, but he said that Kuwait wanted to consolidate its relations with Turkey, particularly as the latter played a major part in the operation for the liberation of Kuwait and continues to impose an economic embargo on the Iraqi regime until that regime complies with all UN Security Council resolutions.

Asked if the visit had anything to do with providing Kuwaiti financial aid to Turkey, the Kuwaiti minister said: There can be no doubt about that, because Turkey is losing some of its revenues as a result of the economic blockade against the Iraqi regime. So we expect that this matter will be discussed with the Turkish prime minister. [passage omitted]

Oman

Sultan on Expansion of Ties With Iran

LD1912110493 Tehran IRNA in English 1031 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] Abu Dhabi, Dec. 19, IRNA—Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id of Oman Saturday described Iran as the powerful country in the region and underscored his country's desire in further expansion and deepening of ties with Iran.

The Omani head of state made the remark in a meeting with the Iranian ambassador to Muscat, Mohammad 'Arab, at the end of the ambassador's mission in that country.

Calling for further expanded bilateral ties in different fields, Sultan Qabus said that regional countries should cooperate with each other and settle their disputes through peaceful means.

Describing present oil market as "dangerous", he called on OPEC and non-OPEC countries to coordinate their stands to confront with the falling oil price.

The ambassador appreciated the positive role that Sultan Qabus played in the strengthening of bilateral cooperation in different fields and in creating understanding among regional countries.

He then expressed hope for further broadening of Tehran-Muscat relations.

At the end of the meeting Sultan Qabus awarded the Iranian ambassador with a medal of honor as a sign of appreciation for his services.

Cabinet Reshuffle Seen as 'Modernization' Move

94P50063A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 16 Dec 93 p 6

[Commentary by Husayn 'Abd-al-Ghani]

[Text] Muscat—The limited governmental adjustments made by Sultan Qabus Bin-Sa'id recently confirms the direction which he began in the thorough ministerial shuffle of 1991—that of expanding the Omani political elite's base on the one hand and of modernizing this elite with "new," "young" elements on the other. Within this framework, the decrees by Sultan Qabus, who heads the government himself, consist of granting ministerial posts to two new faces. As'ad Bin-Tariq Al Sa'id (son of the sultan's paternal uncle) has taken the post of chairman of the High Commission for Conferences (with the rank of minister). This is the commission charged with preparing the venues and work schedules for the Omani official delegations to important meetings such as EC

summits or Arab summits. Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Marhun al-Ma'mari is granted the same rank and the post of chairman of the public corporation for youths' sports and cultural activities.

The two new ministers are taking the place of Ibrahim al-Subhi, who occupied both posts and who was dismissed last month in an unusual manner just days before the celebration of the national anniversary, in which he was presiding over the celebration of Youth Year.

Shaykh Sayf Bin-Hashil al-Maskari received what is considered to be a reward for his excellence in the political post which he filled for 4 years—assistant secretary general for political affairs in the Gulf Cooperation Council. The sultan's decree promoted him to the rank of ministry undersecretary for "tourism" affairs in the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Dr. al-Yaqzan Bin-Talib al-Hana'i, who belongs to one of the most important tribes and traditional families of Oman, was chosen to be a member of both the Development Council and the Financial Affairs Council, which deal with the economic planning process and the distribution of resources in the country, in addition to being given the post of special adviser to the Sultanate's Royal Court.

The significance of the government reshuffle is not limited to "modernization" of the Omani elite by replacing old faces with new faces. It also promotes the "expansion" the base of the Omani elite which, it appears, is taking steps to benefit from the new skills that have been developed within the new state mechanism and within the private business sector. The elite seeks to benefit as well from the elements who have obtained academic degrees domestically and abroad not available to the elements of that elite in the first stage of the Omani modernization process in 1970.

The continual expansion of the Omani elite's base encompasses a better representation of the traditional tribal and regional structure, which still enjoys a special importance in a traditional society in addition to that enjoyed by expertise, education, and political loyalty.

The new shuffle is significant also with regard to "youth" in the Omani political and governmental elite, since most of those included in the recent decrees are less than 40 or 45 years old.

The most prominent thing about the recent adjustments, however, is that they transfer elements belonging to the military elite or establishment to the civilian government system or establishment. As'ad Bin-Tariq transferred to his new post from the military post of commander of the Omani Army Armored Corps. Shaykh Muhammad Bin-Marhun al-Ma'mari transferred to the leadership of the youth organization from the post of deputy inspector-general of the Omani Police, with the rank of major general.

It is more than possible that the transfers from the strong military and security establishment were done with the purpose of strengthening the ties among the state establishments and eliminating any severe divisiveness between them, and with the purpose of transferring discipline and professionalism (which the military establishment offers) to the civilian administrative system, since the transfers were accompanied by promotions (to the rank of minister).

Yemen

Cabinet Continues Discussions on Crisis

JN2212134393 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] The Council of Ministers held a regular session this morning under First Deputy Prime Minister brother Dr. Hasan Muhammad Makki.

The Council examined a host of issues related to recent domestic developments. The Council underscored its previous decision, which urged the parties to the dispute to refrain from erecting any new military checkpoints, and to keep the military situation as it was before the eruption of the crisis. The Council also endorsed the formation of a ministerial committee to be headed by brother Deputy Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Wahhab al-Unsi. Fish Resources Minister Fadl Muhsin and members of the military committee set up by a cabinet decision will be members of that committee, which will be assigned the task of following up on the developments pertaining to the military situation and other repercussions of the crisis. It is the committee's job to take the necessary measures to return the military situation to normal. It has to submit a report to the Council of Ministers in this regard at the earliest possible opportunity.

The Council also reviewed a report submitted by the brother interior minister on the security situation, including the highway robbery in the Bajil area on the al-Hudaydah road, as well as the way security men, in cooperation with the Armed Forces and citizens, handled the robbers in this incident.

The Council expressed its appreciation for the efforts made by the Interior Ministry leaders and cadres as well as the Armed Forces personnel to handle this incident. It also commended the roles played by security men, Air Force personnel, and citizens in this operation, which aimed to deal a blow to outlaws. The Council recommended that martyred soldier Yaha Muhammad Salih al-Unsi and wounded soldier Muhammad Muhammad Nasir Harsan be promoted. It also appealed to the public prosecution and judiciary to complete their investigation and trials of the defendants in this case as soon as possible. It further urged the security organs to double their efforts to confront the acts of violence and sabotage.

Concluding its session, the Council reviewed a report submitted by the Ministry of Supply and Trade on the visit made by the deputy supply and trade minister to the Republic of Poland.

GPC Urges Joint Efforts To Emerge From Crisis

JN2112134893 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 21 Dec 93

["Text" of statement issued by the General Committee of the General People's Congress in Sanaa on 20 December—read by announcer]

[Text] Chaired by brother Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih, chairman of the Presidential Council and secretary general of the General People's Congress [GPC], the GPC's General Committee convened an extraordinary session on Monday evening, 20 December, 1993. The committee examined a number of issues and developments on the national scene, led by the regrettable current political crisis and its ramifications.

The General Committee deplored the persistence and escalation of the crisis and its negative repercussions on the political situation and the development process in the country as well as the livelihoods of ordinary citizens. The General Committee urged all the political and social forces and organizations in Yemen to measure up to their national and historic responsibilities at this critical stage of the country's history. It urged all national efforts to combine to contain the crisis and its ramifications and to create the right climate for a national, responsible dialogue that would produce a united vision and a strong political will to lift Yemen from a crisis casting a shadow over the national economy and the wellbeing of the ordinary citizens.

Within the context of an appraisal of the level and results of the expanded national dialogue among the partners of the national coalition and political and social forces active throughout the country, the General Committee hereby pronounces itself happy with the resumption of the dialogue and reiterates its desire to uphold and strengthen it and lead it toward a drastic solution to the crisis and a reinforcement of trust and political stability and sound foundations for a modern Yemeni state where constitutional institutions and law and order predominate—a state based on the principles of justice, democracy, and human rights.

The General Committee welcomes the expanded national dialogue committee's decision setting the target date of 10 January, 1944, for the latter to complete its work. The committee would like to assert that the GPC will be bound by whatever agreements are reached within the framework of the dialogue committee. The General Committee, having acquainted itself with the deplorable ramifications of the crisis in terms of the media and the damage caused by the irresponsible media campaigns and the altercations to the homeland and national unity, declares a halt to all forms of media attacks on the part of the GPC as had been made clear by the brother president, the secretary general of the GPC, when he met yesterday with the brother commissioners of the republic's districts as a goodwill gesture and to create the right climate for a successful dialogue.

On this occasion, the General Committee calls on the brother party leaders and political organizations and other party cadres to make a courageous decision and immediately halt all irresponsible media campaigns and altercations that only hurt the country's democratic practice, political pluralism and the freedom of speech, contribute to a delay in creating the right conditions for a national reconciliation, and introduce an atmosphere of tension and anxiety in the society.

The General Committee urges the competent government and judicial authorities to assume their responsibilities and implement the press law. Out of a sense of national responsibility in these extraordinary circumstances the nation is facing and out of adherence to all national parameters, the General Committee reaffirms President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's consent to the 18 points put forward by the Yemeni Socialist Party. The General Committee hopes the GPC's initiative will be the right way out of the crisis. It urges the speedy putting in place of the mechanisms and drawing up a timetable for implementation so as to reinforce confidence and ensure a speedy end to the regrettable crisis and its ramifications that took the country back to the pre-22 May, 1990 era, and in a manner that could prevent a repitition of the crisis in the future. The General Committee, out of confidence in our Yemeni masses who stand to gain most from unity and democracy, will safeguard all its national achievements, notably unity and democracy, and will never abandon them. It will lend every support to all efforts to lift the country from the current conditions and overcome all kinds of challenges.

YSP Source on Call To Halt Media Campaign

JN2112205693 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] A Yemeni Socialist Party [YSP] Political Bureau source has said the party is fully committed to what will be reached by the parties to the national dialogue on the end of the media campaign that has continued to fuel the fire of the crisis, reopen wounds, and foil efforts to achieve cohesion and accord.

The source said the party in the past had unilaterally committed itself to the resolutions of the Council of Ministers and the House of Representatives. This was based on its declared position that the repercussions of the irresponsible media campaign does not help the discussion of the causes of the crisis. They seek to foil any solution in order to maintain the status quo, in order to make it impossible to build the unity state and its unionist democratic institutions.

In a statement to the Yemeni news agency, SABA', the source said the party believes ending media campaigns will create a good atmosphere for national dialogue.

Consequently, abiding by this is an expression of good intent to discuss the real causes of the crisis. The party stresses the importance of beginning discussions of these causes to directly discuss the roots of the crisis, without trying to escape the consequences or to mix papers or confuse issues. At the same time, the party said that discussing several issues while ignoring the major issue will confuse any calculations based on the possibility of overcoming the crisis.

Concluding its statement, the source pointed out that the YSP is interested in tackling all pending issues on various levels with the objective of achieving stability and security for Yemen, its neighbors, and friends.

Salih Receives Yeltsin Message on Crisis, Ties

JN2212130693 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] Presidential Council Chairman Lieutenant General 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih today received Igor Ivashchenko, ambassador of the friendly Russian Federation in Sanaa, who relayed to the brother president a message from Russian President Boris Yeltsin on bilateral ties, the areas of bilateral cooperation between the two friendly countries, and the Russian stand toward current developments in our country.

The message expressed the Russian Federation's firm support for Yemeni unity, which is based on democracy and political pluralism, which is taking root in Yemen. The message affirmed Russia's eagerness to see this experiment promoted in our country. It also noted the importance of resorting to dialogue, behaving wisely, and demonstrating tolerance to bring about progress and prosperity in Yemen and promote its international reputation. The message indicated that Yemeni unity undoubtedly falls in line with the true interests of world and regional security. It said that Russia deems unified Yemen a traditional and friendly partner. Russia will relentlessly seek to promote bilateral ties and enhance bilateral cooperation in the interest of both countries, the message maintained.

For his part, the brother Presidential Council chairman highly valued this good Russian position. He commended the traditional bilateral ties, noting that they are based on friendship, cooperation, and mutual respect.

Ex-President Welcomes Launch of National Dialogue

PM2112115093 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 20 Dec 93 p 2

[Salwa al-Ustuwani report: "'Ali Nasir Muhammad's Plan To Resolve Yemeni Crisis Excludes Foreign Mediation, Calls for Reactivating Dialogue"]

[Excerpt] Damascus—Former Yemeni President 'Ali Nasir Muhammad yesterday expressed his satisfaction with the launch of the national dialogue in Yemen. He said: I bless this dialogue and hope that all parties will achieve results and will not need anyone's intervention. And they do not need any Arab or foreign mediation.

Asked about his return to Yemen, he told AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: It depends on the acceptance of the initiative I submitted to the parties concerned with the crisis and its resolution. Then I can move to Yemen to follow up the implementation of the proposals.

The former Yemeni president was speaking to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in his residence in Damascus, where he was receiving condolences from a number of Syrian, Yemeni, and Arab officials for the death of his nephew Hadi Ahmad Nasir Muhammad.

He said that he had received some Yemeni parties' acceptance of his plan to resolve the crisis, but the other parties are still studying it, and that he was awaiting their reply. [passage omitted]

Talabani, Barzani Sign 'Strategic Agreement'

NC2112181993 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1700 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Yesterday morning brother Jalal Talabani and brother Mas'ud Barzani signed the strategic agreement between the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] and the Democratic Party of Kurdistan [DPK] at the office of the PUK secretary general in Irbil.

The signing ceremony was attended by members of the PUK Political Bureau brothers Rasul (Maman), [name indistinct] Rasul 'Ali, Dr. Fu'ad Ma'sum, Dr. Talal Fu'ad, Lieutenant 'Umar, Quraydun 'Abd-al- Qadir, Qadir al-Haj 'Ali, 'Umar Qaddah, and Jabbar Farman, in addition to the brother members of the DPK Political Bureau.

Kurdish Presidential Council Members Named

JN2112194693 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1520 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Jawhar Namiq Salim, speaker of the Kurdistan parliament, has chaired a special meeting to discuss the proposal of forming the Presidential Council. The meeting was attended by the parliament's deputy speaker, the parliament's secretary, and leaders of the blocs of the Democratic Party of Kurdistan [DPK] and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK].

Jawhar Namiq Salim opened the meeting with a speech. He then asked the secretary to read the draft proposal on the Presidential Council. The proposal was then discussed in detail by the deputy speaker and the leaders of the two blocs in addition to the Council members. They presented their views in a brotherly manner on the duties and prerogatives of the Presidential Council. The speaker then noted the agreement between the political bureaus of our party and the allied PUK on the Presidential Council. Then the articles of the proposal and its paragraphs were read and the proposal was approved by a majority vote.

In accordance with the second article of the Presidential Council Law in the Iraqi Kurdistan region, the Council is composed of the two candidates who won the greatest number of votes held in accordance with Law No. 50 adopted on 19 May 1992, the speaker of parliament, the prime minister, and two political bureau members from both parties.

The Presidential Council is now composed of the following:

1. Brother struggler Mas'ud Barzani, DPK leader.
2. Brother Jalal Talabani, PUK secretary general.
3. Jawhar Namiq Salim, speaker of the Kurdistan parliament.
4. Kawthar Rasul 'Ali, prime minister of the Kurdistan region.
5. Sami 'Abd-al-Rahman, DPK political bureau member.
6. Rasul Mamand, PUK political bureau member.
7. Dr. (Rawznuri Shawayh), DPK political bureau member.
8. 'Umar Fattah, PUK member of the political member.

Law Forming Presidential Council

NC2112210993 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1700 GMT 21 Dec 93

["Text" of the law of the Presidential Council of the Region of Iraqi Kurdistan, issued 20 December 1993—read by announcer]

[Text] Decree: Based on the provisions of Paragraph 1 of Article 56 of Law No. 1 of 1992, and in accordance with a review by a legal quorum of members of the Kurdistan National Assembly of Iraq, the Kurdistan National Assembly at its session held on 20 December 1993 decided to issue the following law:

Law of the Presidential Council [hay'at ri'asat] of the Region of Iraqi Kurdistan:

Article 1. Excluding the provisions of Law No. 2 of 1992, a council shall be formed called the Presidential Council of the Region of Iraqi Kurdistan. It will exercise the powers and tasks outlined in the aforementioned law until the completion of the second stage of electing a leader for the Kurdistan liberation movement.

Article 2. The Presidential Council mentioned in article 1 of this law shall be composed of the two candidates who won the majority of votes in the elections held on 19 May 1992 according to Law No. 2 of 1992; the speaker of the National Assembly of Iraqi Kurdistan; the Council of Ministers of Iraqi Kurdistan; and two members of each of the political bureaus of the two parties to which the two candidates belong.

Article 3. The decisions of the Presidential Council shall be made unanimously and shall bear the signatures of both candidates mentioned in Article No. 2 of this law. Should either of the candidates be absent due to being outside the region, the signature of the candidate who is present shall suffice. The absence of either candidate shall have no effect on the quorum of the Presidential Council meeting.

Article 4. Should both candidates be absent outside the region of Kurdistan, decisions shall be made by agreement of the remaining Presidential Council members and shall be signed by the speaker of the National Assembly of the Iraqi Kurdistan and the Council of Ministers of Iraqi Kurdistan.

Article 5. The National Assembly of Iraqi Kurdistan shall undertake:
1. To name the two candidates mentioned in Article No. 2 of this law in light of the results of the elections held on 19 May 1992.
2. To name members of the two political bureaus nominated for membership in the Presidential Council after (?endorsement) by the leaderships of both parties to which they belong.

3. To entrust members of the Presidential Council with performing their tasks according to this law and Law No. 2 of 1992.

Article 6. Members of the Presidential Council shall be sworn-in according to Article 9 of Law No. 2 of 1992 before the National Assembly of Iraqi Kurdistan before exercising the tasks and powers assigned them.

Article 7. All the decisions made and measures taken according to the powers outlined in Law No. 2 of 1992 and up to the date of issuance of this law shall be considered to be legal and valid.

Article 8. Any clause that contravenes the provisions of this law shall be invalid.

Article 9. This law goes into force as of the date of its publication in the Official Gazette.

Signed: Jawhar Namiq Salim, speaker of the National Assembly of Iraqi Kurdistan.

Barzani, Talabani Address Parliament

NC2112214593 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1700 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Following the Kurdish parliament's ratification yesterday of the law on the Presidential Council of Iraqi Kurdistan, brothers Jalal Talabani and Mas'ud Barzani, in their capacity as members of that council, held a news conference at the parliament hall. It was attended by the speaker of the parliament, the prime minister of the Kurdistan region, members of the Political Bureaus of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan [PUK] and the Democratic Party of Kurdistan [DPK], members of parliament, and a number of ministers. The two leaders spoke about the formation of the Presidential Council and the strategic agreement signed between the PUK and the DPK.

The parliament speaker began the proceedings by welcoming brothers Talabani and Barzani and congratulated the Kurdish people on the achievement of this important step, which will inevitably strengthen the ties of brotherhood and develop the Kurdish government and parliament.

Brother Mas'ud Barzani then delivered the following speech: In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful. I am very pleased by our meeting here together in the Parliament of Kurdistan so that we can together announce the good news to the Kurdish people. The Kurdish National Assembly ratified this law today so as to fill the vacuum that existed on the leadership issue.

it was a blessed step and we hope that we will overcome the stands of the past. We also hope that I and my dear brother Jalal, with the help of the other brothers will get legally involved in the authority and action of the region's government and be able to support the government with the aim of upholding the law so that the government will in practice become one of law and order, so that the Kurdish people can live happily and safely in Kurdistan.

I would also like to convey to you another piece of good news: A strategic agreement was signed by the PUK and the DPK today. This agreement is another blessed step. It explains with all clarity the actions and cooperation to uphold the law and to support the parliament and the government. We now know more than ever before about how to act and proceed and are also aware of the extent of our responsibility and the way to carry it out.

I hope that, as of today, there will be no doubts that the law will be upheld in Kurdistan. I also like to tell the enemies that they should not feel happy if a difference in views arises one day between the PUK and the DPK over a specific issue. When it comes to strategic issues—the protection of parliament and the government, and the protection of the Kurdish people's supreme interests—we are not two parts but a single unit. It is natural for us as two parties to have different views over some issues. Even if this conflict does exist between us, we will, God willing, work to ensure that it will not go beyond civilized and modern behavior. Even if there is conflict, we are going to manage it. I hope that our conflict will be in regard to extending more services to the Kurds and Kurdistan.

Brother Jalal Talabani then delivered the following speech: Dear brothers and sisters. First, I would like to thank you members of the Kurdish National Assembly for granting us this honor and duty. As noted by our dear brother Mas'ud, the main objective of the dialogue is for us to work together to strengthen the parliament and government of the region of Kurdistan and uphold the law all over Kurdistan. We accept with thanks the historic duty you have granted us. We promise you that we will work strenuously and struggle with all our might to ensure the success of this unprecedented democratic experience in Iraqi Kurdistan, to make more efforts to consolidate democracy and democratic rights, to consolidate human rights all over Kurdistan, and to make our Kurdish society a civilized one where democracy, human rights, and all freedoms prevail and where the supremacy of law is the arbiter of conflicts.

From now on we will do all we can by devoting our efforts to resolving the real problems of the masses of the people. We hope that by signing the long-term strategic agreement, we can turn a new leaf to marshal all our potential resources to achieve our people's goals, address the economic problems, raise the standard of living, build Kurdistan, and resolve all problems between the PUK and DPK within a civilized framework. It is only natural that there should be differences in views even within the same party and even in the same department of a party. Discussions should be honest and aim at offering the best services and resolving the problems of the people. God willing, this fraternity will be everlasting, a cornerstone cementing the bonds of unity and

brotherhood among the masses of the people of Kurdistan and enhancing our efforts and potential to serve our people as we did during the years of the revolution.

As our dear brother Mas'ud said, the enemies' hopes will inevitably be foiled and they will no longer see any split in relations between the two parties. The enemies' hopes will never be fulfilled because we are all determined to foster and invigorate this relationship. I would like to tell you that my and my dear brother Mas'ud's goal after forming and consolidating the parliament and government of the Region of Kurdistan is to watch over and cherish our fraternity and the common struggle of our parties in all spheres. We would like this spirit to prevail in all party circles beginning with the leaderships and ending with the supporters and people of Kurdistan.

Brothers and sisters, members of the Kurdistan Parliament: I am sure that you will support us with all your strength in realizing the success of our other important step, a step designed to promote the success of our democratic experience. I would like to advise the masses of the Kurdistan people that, God willing, this step will serve their gains. The relations of fraternity and common struggle between our two parties will be the foundation stone of the unity of the people. As time goes by, the unity and amity within the ranks of the Kurdistan Front will be further strengthened to serve the masses of the people of Kurdistan. I wish you victory. Thank you. [passage omitted]

Afterwards, brother Mas'ud Barzani read the names of the remaining four members of the Presidential Council. They are: Rasul Mamand and 'Umar Fattah for the PUK, and Sami 'Abd-al-Rahman and Dr. (Rawznuri Shawayh) for the DPK.

Regime Expels Kurds to 'Liberated Areas'

JN2112192693 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Kurdistan in Arabic 1520 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] We have learned from reliable sources that a force belonging to the Iraqi regime attacked the village of (Shana Mirr) in the Makhmur area on the night of 18/19 december. The force ordered the villagers to emigrate to the liberated areas in Kurdistan or to southern Iraq.

The citizens were then forced to leave for the liberated areas under pressure from the racist regime, which did not make any moves against the Arab families which had been housed there and remained there by orders of the regime.

Islamic Opposition Stresses Territorial Integrity

JN2112182993 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1555 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Damascus, 21 Dec (SANA)—The Coordination and Follow-up Committee of the Islamic and pan-Arab trends in Iraq has emphasized the territorial integrity of Iraq and the unity of its land. The committee emphasized that national unity is in the interest of all those who should enjoy their rights and fulfill their duties equally without discrimination.

In a statement issued at the end of two meetings held here, the committee emphasized that toppling the Iraqi regime is a central objective that cannot be relinquished. It emphasized there is no possibility of coexistence with that regime, no matter what deceptive slogans it raises and what concessions and promises it may offer to the opposition, regional states and the world. This regime is corrupt in essence and nature, and cannot be corrected. No understanding can be reached with this regime. It cannot be trusted.

The committee emphasized the importance of setting up a regime that respects law and human rights as stipulated in international laws and charters endorsed by the United Nations. These are led by the right to expression, party affiliation, and free election of representatives by the people, in addition to other laws that guarantee human dignity.

The committee condemned the campaign of annihilation and siege to which the people in Kurdistan and the marshlands are exposed.

It called on all forces and regional and world governments to quickly embark on steps to rescue our people in Iraq from the methods of annihilation and slow death to which they are exposed.

It said nationalist constants are the basis of the Iraqi opposition's unity. It emphasized the importance of maintaining the independence of decisionmaking by the Iraqi opposition.

Paper: High Prices, Corruption, 'Terror' Rampant

PM2012145593 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 17 Dec 93 p 2

[Unattributed report: "AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT Publishes Latest Report From Inside Iraq; Baghdad Turns Into Terror and Ghost Town at Night; Checkpoints Turn Into Bandits"]

[Text] Baghdad, exclusive to AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT—While the Iraqi Government seems to be busy trying to improve its external image in a bid to break the siege imposed on Iraq for over three years, Iraq's image inside the country seems to be saddening and tragic. Security conditions are extremely disrupted, prices have become astronomical, corruption among the ruling clique has reached a peak, and the situation on the ground presages real explosions. A report which AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT received from inside Iraq indicates that the criticisms which used to be whispered on a limited scale are now uttered openly. Even some non-Tikriti Army officers—Tikrit is Saddam Husayn's birthplace—have begun to talk openly about the unbearable

conditions and the corruption and illicit wealth of the ruling clique and those revolving in its orbit.

One possible cause of merriment on the Iraqi scene is that 'Udayy Saddam Husayn, the Iraqi president's son, is the one leading the official "opposition." And through his newspapers and radio and television stations he expresses opposition to some government decisions and even some measures taken by his father which the Revolution Command Council itself cannot discuss and express an opinion on.

Ordinary people in Iraq know that 'Udayy Saddam Husayn's "opposition" is a kind of smokescreen designed to absorb the indignation that has reached such a pitch that the regime has started to feel that an explosion is inevitable and that the methods of repression, executions, and muzzling people are no longer achieving the results they used to achieve in the past.

In this context, even a passer-by knows that the sons of senior Iraqi officials—including 'Udayy Saddam Husayn, of course—are the ones running the black market. And that, for example, one of Tariq 'Aziz' sons has a profitable share of the hard currency speculation trade, which is flourishing these days and tends to fluctuate according to political developments.

As is known, the Iraqi authorities issued tough decisions banning trading in imported foreign goods, including goods already in the stores.

It has been proved that these decisions are in favor of the senior officials' sons, including the president's sons and the sons of his relatives, who control the black market and smuggling operations, which are flourishing in an unprecedented manner across the borders with Syria, Iran, and Turkey.

Thus, anyone who has sufficient money can acquire any quantities of foreign goods, including clothes, electrical equipment, cigarettes, and perfumes, as the sidewalks of al-Karradah turn into a real exhibition for these goods once darkness falls and ordinary shops close.

If any of these evening traders is asked whether he fears the police, who are supposed to apply the law to everyone, he will not hesitate to say that he belongs to the 'Udayy group or the group of Watban, one of Saddam Husayn's relatives, or this or that group belonging to senior Iraqi party or state officials or their sons.

In light of this situation, which has been in existence for over two years, Iraqi society has turned into two distinct classes: a very rich class which owns restaurants, hotels, and luxury night clubs, spends limitlessly, and owns luxury cars and beautiful places in the most exclusive areas of Baghdad. It is the class of the rulers and the president's relatives and "friends" (and the president's friends are a category granted by Saddam to anyone who proves to be loyal to him). The second class is a very poor class which can hardly find its daily food. It represents workers and minor employees and military personnel.

In this context an eyewitness has said that a senior Army officer—a brigadier—who does not belong to the group close to the rulers tried for hours one evening to sell a video recorder which he was hiding in a plastic bag in order to get some dinars to buy some food for his family and children.

All food supplies are available, but their prices are astronomical. For example, a kilogram of meat costs 175 dinars. A tray of 30 eggs costs 170 dinars, and a carton of Iraqi "Sumar" [as transliterated] cigarettes costs 500 dinars. This is in the knowledge that the dollar's value has soared to 180 dinars and that the salary of a university lecturer does not exceed 400 dinars and a colonel's salary does not exceed 700 dinars at best.

Among the new phenomena in Iraq—as a result of the crushing economic crisis and the soaring prices—is the habit of using the local tobacco "al-Hayshah." Primitive cigarette-making methods has begun to flourish again. And it is normal now to see a university professor rolling a cigarette in the old way.

All this is happening while the state with all its organs and institutions, including the Army and public security forces, is busy building the "Leaders' Bridge"—one of the biggest and most important bridges in the world—which is being constructed over the Tigris river near al-Jadiriyah. Experts stress that there is no need for it in this place and that the area was chosen for adornment reasons, not for the sake of resolving the traffic crisis in the Iraqi capital.

In addition to the high prices and corruption, Baghdad, a city which used stay awake until morning, has become—with the exception of some major streets— a ghost town after sunset, and venturing outside at night has become a great risk: a risk for the house itself and a risk for the car driven by anyone who tries to embark on such an adventure. In this atmosphere, Baghdad is full of stories and tales. Every day there is a new story talking about the same thing: a house left for a few hours, and when the owners return they find it absolutely empty. Another story talks about how one man left his car in front of his friend's house only to find it later without tires and mirrors, and in some cases without doors.

According to testimonies, most of the thefts, which have become a serious phenomenon, are carried out by members of the ruling party who have been entrusted with night security in towns and villages and who have been granted full powers to hold public trials and execute anyone suspected of involvement in theft operations.

The phrase circulating in Iraq now is "the guard is the thief." And the ruling party's militias entrusted with guarding the districts and side streets in order to put an end to the growing car theft phenomenon are said to have become a symbol for plunder and theft; it is they who have made Baghdad and the other Iraqi cities shiver as a result of their night attacks.

What is more, people the nature of whose work requires that they move a lot between distant Iraqi cities say that they have begun to fear the checkpoints belonging to the security organs normally guarding the major roads more than they fear bandits and the gangs of Army deserters. And there are stories which make your hair turn gray. They are about the practices of these checkpoints and their attacks on travelers, especially at night. So on the basis of the report in question, it can be said that anyone who knew Iraq before and visits now will find a huge difference. He will find that the scourge of corruption, which was almost nonexistent, has become a serious phenomenon and reached even the judicial authorities, which used to be known for their honesty, honor, and impartiality.

No visitor, especially non-Iraqis, can pass any checkpoints without paying a kind of bribe. A sum of money must be paid to the customs officer, a gift must be given to the intelligence man, and something must be given to the security man who stamps the passport. All this is happening without any hesitation and openly.

Furthermore, no transaction can be conducted in any government department without a bribe. For example, a driver's permit cannot be renewed without a bribe. And it is impossible to obtain a certificate of good conduct without paying a sum of money. The same applies to registering a piece of land.

Saddam's Sons Said in Charge of Narcotics Project

NC2112174193 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi Islamic Revolution in Arabic 1430 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Iraq's foreign currency reserves are gradually drying up and revenue from smuggled petroleum is no longer enough to meet the regime's hard currency needs. For this reason, Saddam's regime has turned its attention to the cultivation of narcotic crops and drug trafficking.

Reliable eyewitnesses have reported that the tyrant's sons 'Udayy and Qusayy are supervising a budding secret project to produce hashish and other drugs.

The eyewitnesses add that large tracts of land lying on both sides of the main road in (al-Haswah) in Babil Governorate have been set aside for the new Saddamist project.

U.S. Accused of Pushing UN States on Sanctions

JN2012092593 Baghdad AL-'IRAQ in Arabic 14 Dec 93 p 8

['Abdallah al-Amin "Ideas and Visions" column: "Political Performance Worthy of Respect"]

[Text] It can be said that most of those who have followed up the U.S. position on Iraq with some accuracy will have concluded that this position has been divested of all covers that could have given it some objectivity.

This U.S. position pushed international organizations and officials within these organizations who should have well-known qualities, primarily independence and the ability to adopt a just stand, into adopting stands that are far from the legal limits that define their tasks and responsibilities and the duties of the organizations they work in.

The United States pushed countries and governments into adopting positions that not only contradict their declared principles but also totally violate the interests of their people.

If these political positions expressed by international organizations and governments and their practices were during the past stage covered by international legitimacy, in claiming that Iraq is not adhering to resolutions issued by the UN Security Council, then this cover is no longer valid.

Iraq complied with what was stipulated in the aforementioned resolutions. It implemented these resolutions with much awareness, commitment, and accuracy. Any institution, government, or person concerned about maintaining some credibility and professional responsibility, if not historical and ethical responsibility, cannot but admit that Iraq did what it was required to do despite the oppression, repression, and unjust standards imposed on it. This was evident in statements made by quite a number of those who were delegated to follow up the resolutions and the way they were implemented.

Indeed, the UN Security Council admitted the positive Iraqi position. Moreover, despite U.S. pressures, some UN Security Council permanent members made clear indications in this regard.

It is base and impudent, if not illogical, that positions toward Iraq have remained unchanged. The U.S. position, which even distanced itself from the positions of its closest allies, is still the same, and the fabrication of events and creation of justifications continue. It is enough to recall how the Iraqi delegation to the United Nations was received with the stirring of two storms in order to continue the embargo on the enduring and steadfast Iraqis. The first storm was concerning demonstrations by farmers who were dispossessed of their farms, given that these demonstrations are a legitimate right and can be expected of any human being whose property has been stolen from him. The second storm was concerning the use of chemical weapons in an Iraqi area adjacent to Iran.

It has become clear that the positions of four permanent UN Security Council members are no longer the same as they were some months ago and that these positions are distancing themselves from the U.S. axis, even if their distance and their speeds are not the same.

The constant U.S. hostile position against Iraq and its leadership does not proceed from purely U.S. calculations. This position lost much of its justification and most of its covers. Many of those who used to rally

around this position have started to move away from it. Indeed, the motives for adopting this position have been exposed and it has become famous for its lack of objectivity both in public and in private. This position is governed much more by the Zionist factor than by the U.S. factor—an opinion that has been voiced inside the United States.

It must be borne in mind that in the recent stage the U.S. Administration has been trying to reshuffle papers and obstruct Iraq's political performance in terms of implementing UN Security Council Resolutions in order to retain any amount of justification for the continuation of the embargo on Iraq and its great people.

Naturally, Iraq's political performance will continue, which should be able to ensure the isolation of the U.S. stand, not only from its allies but from Americans inside the United States who have not been affected by the Zionist cancer.

Through the steadfastness of its people and the ingenuity of leader Saddam Husayn, our great Iraq has proved that it is stronger than all the aggressors' schemes. Iraq has aborted all these schemes and reached the shore of safety and decent future.

Paper Views Role in Gulf Stability, Security

JN2212101393 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0820 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] Baghdad, 22 Dec (INA)—The newspaper AL-THAWRAH, which speaks for the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, has affirmed that the stability and security of the Arabian Gulf cannot be achieved in the absence of Iraq, which has always been and will remain a basic pillar of regional security and stability, whether agents like this or not. Iraq, the paper adds, will continue to be instrumental in safeguarding the sovereignty of the region.

In an article published today, the paper goes on to say: Despite all that has happened, Iraq has been resisting and holding out. Thanks to its firm willpower and steadfastness, Iraq will emerge victorious, although this will be detested by agents and their masters.

Referring to the convocation of the so-called 14th Gulf Cooperation Council summit, the paper says that the Fahd regime, given its parochial agentry as well as its conspiracies against the Arab future to promote the interests of the Arab nation's enemies, is now posing a real threat to stability, security, and peace in the region.

The paper indicates that the Saudi regime's conspiracies against Sudan, its insolent intervention aimed at undermining stability in Yemen, its constant harassment of Iraq, its endorsement of Zionist plans, its subservience to Washington's policies, and its continuous interference in the domestic affairs of the Gulf states, as manifested in its attacks against Qatar, all provide ample evidence that what is taking place is a result of the disequilibrium created in the Arabian Gulf region in the aftermath of the 30-state aggression against Iraq.

The paper continues: Fahd, who is subservient to the United States and Zionism, has reached rock bottom in his agentry, and accepted to play the role of a minesweeper to lay the grounds for subjugating the region to imperialism and Zionism.

The paper stresses that this regime is no less dangerous to the Arab future than Zionism, particularly since it was this regime which financed the aggression against Iraq, not to mention the dirty and shameful conspiratorial role it has played in maintaining the aggression, aiding agents, and providing bribes at various international forums to maintain the embargo against Iraq.

AL-THAWRAH says that steadfast Iraq, with its defiance of aggression and conspiracies, will remain the obsession of the Al Sa'ud and al-Sabah dynasties. This will remain the case, the paper argues, as long as Iraq remains outside the confines of subservience and capitulation.

Concluding its article, the paper says: Given all this, it was only natural for [Saudi Foreign Minister Prince] Sa'ud al-Faysal to express disappointment over the development of Iraq's intrinsic capabilities and its enhanced steadfastness despite the embargo imposed on it.

Rabin: No Compromise Agreement at Oslo Talks

TA2112201593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 2000 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin has said that it is possible that after the Paris talks there will be more meetings between Israel and the Palestinians to reach an agreement on the implementation of the Declaration of Principles.

He further said that he does not know the source of the reports from Tunis that a compromise agreement was made at the Oslo talks. Mr. Rabin was speaking this evening when he came out to meet members of the Peace Now Movement, staging a vigil outside his home in support of the government's political moves.

Rabin Comments on Talks at Knesset Meeting

U.S., Arab, Other States Support Stand

TA2112151593 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1400 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Egypt, Morocco, and a third Arab country support Israel's position concerning areas of disagreement with the Palestinians. This was revealed today by Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin at the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee. At the session, Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu claimed that the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] Intelligence Branch had issued warnings about security risks entailed in the peace agreement. Our correspondent Tziyon Nanus reports from the Knesset:

[Begin recording] [Nanus] There were three major points on which the Palestinians and Israel disagree, the prime minister said. The issue of external security, control over the border crossings, and the size of the Jericho area. External security would be exclusively in the hands of Israel, Rabin stressed, noting that the issue of the border crossings was also a matter of principle.

[Rabin] There is talk of coordination and some Palestinian presence at the border crossings, while Israel continues to retain control over matters of security pertaining to the people crossing the border—both to prevent them from harming Israel's security and also to prevent people from settling illegally in the territories.

[Nanus] As for the size of the Jericho region, Rabin said that 'Arafat had arrived at the Cairo summit demanding half of the Jordan Rift Valley. Israel, however, had no intention of compromising on this matter either. Rabin presented his red lines on this matter: the boundaries of the Jericho area would not include the settlement of Elisha', nor would the Palestinian area reach up to the border fences around the Dead Sea or the Almog junction. Rabin said that there was no point in holding another summit with Yasir 'Arafat before these three issues were resolved. Besides, he said, three Arab states backed Israel's position on these three matters of principle. Rabin said he was referring to Egypt, Morocco, and a third country the prime minister would not name, apparently Jordan.

[Rabin] We held contacts with several Arab states and I believe that they clearly understand our position—and I will not get into details here—just as the United States and European countries understand our position on these three points.

[Nanus] The prime minister asserted that many Palestinians also understood Israel's position.

At today's meeting of the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee, Likud Chairman Binyamin Netanyahu revealed a document prepared by the IDF's Intelligence Branch.

[Netanyahu] This document describes the large risks caused to national security, both to individual citizens and to the country as a whole, as a result of the agreement with the PLO.

[Nanus] Netanyahu calls the agreement a document of threats. Prime Minister Rabin replied: the IDF Intelligence Branch assessments are not sacrosanct. We have already rejected their assessments in the past; besides, it is their job to warn about all possible threats. [end recording]

[In a similar report, Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1400 GMT on 21 December adds: "Prime Minister Rabin said that many Palestinians, including Abu-Mazin [Mahmud 'Abbas], support the Israeli stand." According to the report, Rabin further told the Knesset committee that "he was surprised by remarks 'Arafat made during their meeting in Cairo because they did not correspond with the agreements made earlier. Rabin added that 'Arafat also expressed an odd concept, which was different from the agreement of principles. Rabin noted that the term responsibility over the external security means that Israel, through the IDF, will be in control of the line separating the Gaza Strip from Egypt, and of the Jordan River, which separates the Jordanian Kingdom from the Judaea and Samaria region."]

No Breakthrough With Syria, Lebanon

TA2112172793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1700 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Speaking before the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee today, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin said that no breakthrough was made in the contacts with Syria and Lebanon during U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's Middle East shuttle. Certain progress was made in the negotiations with Jordan, and it is now willing to improve its relations with Israel in several areas, but no breakthrough was made yet in contacts with it as well.

Our correspondent Yo'el Nir reports that the prime minister further reported that the United States plans to

summon the heads of the peace talks committees to Washington after President Clinton meets Syrian President al-Asad. This forum will decide whether to summon the plenums of the committees, but this plan will also be influenced by the agreement between Israel and the Palestinians. [passage omitted]

[Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew at 1605 GMT on 21 December adds: "Speaking before the Knesset committee, the prime minister said that if 'Arafat announces the establishment of a Palestinian state, he would be violating the Declaration of Principles. He added that patience and a cool head are needed in the negotiations with the PLO, and we should not get excited, not even over dates."]

No Anti-Terror Operations in Gaza, Jericho

TA2112192193 Jerusalem Israel Television Channel 1 Network in Hebrew 1800 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Hanan 'Azran video report]

[Excerpts] For the first time, Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin revealed today to the members of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee that Israel will not be able to operate in Gaza and Jericho to foil terror acts or to pursue terrorists in the region under the PLO control. [passage omitted]

Another clarification Rabin made today: Israel will not arm the Palestinian police force, although the force will be equipped with rifles, submachine guns, and light armored vehicles.

[Begin Rabin recording in progress] ... They will not be able to carry out their task in, for example the City of Gaza, with a quarter of million Palestinians. A police force will not be able to maintain the public order and prevent Gaza from becoming a launching pad for terror attacks against Israelis unless it has the ability to confront them. [end recording]

Knesset Member on Gaza-Jericho Implementation

NC2012091093 Cairo Voice of the Arabs in Arabic 0610 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Telephone interview with Knesset Member 'Abd-al-Wahhab Darawshah, leader of the Arab Democratic Party, in Jerusalem, by Fawzi al-Jundi, in Cairo, carried within the "Dialogue From Afar" program; date not given—recorded]

[Text] [Al-Jundi] Welcome to the Voice of the Arabs.

[Darawshah] Thank you.

[Al-Jundi] Let us start with a picture of the situation inside the occupied Arab territories and the cry the Palestinian citizens have raised in response to Israeli attempts to hamper the implementation of the Gaza-Jericho agreement.

[Darawshah] Through recent contacts and visits to our people in the occupied Palestinian territories, we see the situation being escalated and a feeling of bitterness and frustration among the Palestinian masses because the Israeli-Palestinian Agreement is not being implemented yet. If an Israeli-Palestinian agreement is not reached in the next few days, I fear things will get much worse, the intifadah will escalate, and there will be further bloodshed among the two peoples. The situation is very critical. It is bad. This is why I advised Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin, in a speech I delivered to the Knesset in the past few days, to show greater flexibility on the Israeli negotiators' stances on everything that pertains to the just demands of the Palestinian people.

[Al-Jundi] Despite the Arab Democratic Party [ADP] supporting the current government, it does not have a ministerial portfolio within it. Do you believe your participation in Rabin's government could have a more positive effect on boosting the Middle East peace process?

[Darawshah] True, we now constitute part of the bloc of 61 Knesset members that allows Yitzhaq Rabin to stay in government. Without our party's seats, Rabin can't maintain his government and the Israeli Government will fall. But for the sake of a just peace, to give the peace process a chance to continue, and as long as there are negotiations, we do not want to use this weapon now. We told Rabin to continue his negotiations. You must reach agreement with the PLO and start implementing the agreement. If you do not do that, we can't support you. We are also demanding joining the coalition and getting a ministerial portfolio for the ADP. But we have put off this request until the talks on beginning to implement the Palestinian-Israeli agreement end and in line with an official request from Rabin himself.

[Al-Jundi] I repeat that postponing the implementation of this agreement would encourage the Palestinian and Israeli extremists to step up the struggle. What role could the Arab forces in Israel play in alleviating the harm done by these operations?

[Darawshah] First, we are trying to promote the rational and brave stance of President Yasir 'Arafat and the wise PLO leadership, which has always extended its hand for the sake of a just peace in this region. We support this stance and urge the sons of our Palestinian people to support President 'Arafat's position. We are trying to convince the Israeli public of the need to respond positively to the PLO stance and the Palestinian demands. We are also trying to influence the Israeli Government and the Knesset in this regard.

We are submitting proposals and we are trying to convince the Israeli Government to demonstrate flexibility on the three pending issues, primarily the crossings. We believe that this particular issue must be resolved. The talks in Oslo represent a serious attempt to bridge the gap and work out a compromise. I am optimistic because the Palestinian and Israeli leaderships are committed to

the peace agreement and yearn to implement the Israeli-Palestinian Declaration of Principles, which will serve the interests of the Palestinian and Israeli peoples as well as the region's nations.

[Al-Jundi] An Israeli-Palestinian summit between 'Arafat and Rabin will be held within the next few days following their recent summit in Cairo. Do you think the upcoming summit will achieve what the previous summit failed to achieve? And what are the latest reports on the ongoing contacts to arrange this summit?

[Darawshah] Preparations are under way to arrange a summit that will ensure successful results; the failure of the previous summit did prompt the Israeli and Palestinian negotiators to overcome the difficulties. So, if a second summit takes place, and I believe it will be held in Egypt, it will represent the practical results of negotiations that will succeed and that will consequently advance the peace process. This will lead to the implementation of the Israeli-Palestinian agreement.

[Al-Jundi] Thank you very much.

[Darawshah] Thank you.

Council Not To Set Date for Settlement Drive

TA2112054093 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0500 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] The Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and the Gaza Strip has decided not to determine a precise date for carrying out the new settlement operation it is planning, but rather to implement it on the basis of political developments. The council secretariat reached this decision last night after several members said that unless the operation is prepared on time and in an appropriate manner, it will merely constitute a demonstrative operation.

Our correspondent Gil Litman reports that this decision overrides an earlier decision reached by the initiators of the campaign, stipulating 5 January as the date for its implementation.

Settlers Take Up Residence in North Jerusalem

TA2212061793 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] North of Jerusalem, settlers have taken up residence in homes in Talmon Gimel in the Binyamin District, about a kilometer from the existing settlement of Talmon Bet. A reporter covering the territories says that the homes stood empty for about a year and a half, and last night 10 Jerusalem families moved in.

Settlers told our reporter that once the houses were ready, they had approached the Housing Ministry time and again to purchase the homes and were refused. Half the money for the project came from the Housing Ministry budget itself and the remainder from a settlement company developing fund.

Golan Settlements Receive Supplementary Budget

TA2112115693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1100 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] The Golan Heights settlers have received supplementary budgetary allocations of more than 20 million shekels earmarked for development plans for factories and infrastructure on the Golan Heights. The funds will be distributed by the Treasury, the Construction and Housing Ministry, and the Interior Ministry.

Yehuda Wolman, head of the Golan Heights Regional Council, told our correspondent Hayim Hecht that the supplementary allocations have great political significance at this time—the height of the political process.

IDF Source Notes Coordination With Fatah

TA2112175693 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1600 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] has approved a ceremony of entering a Torah scroll to Joseph's Tomb in Nablus this evening. Our correspondent Gil Litman reports that large forces are securing the event.

A military source said this evening that there is coordination between the IDF, mainly on the level of the Civil Administration, and Fatah members who support peace in Judaea and Samaria. The source added that the IDF has thinned out its forces in northern Samaria in view of the fact that the region has been relatively quiet recently. Speaking to correspondents, the military source stressed that the IDF still focuses on fighting those who plan and perpetrate terror attacks.

Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that an IDF soldier was slightly injured by a stone in the al-Shati' refugee camp this evening. He was taken to the hospital. A general strike was staged in the Gaza Strip today, following a call by [illegible]man [Islamic Resistance Movement].

Police Release 2 'Jewish Underground' Suspects

TA2212114193 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 1100 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] The Police Serious Crimes Squad has decided to release two of the suspects earlier described as key figures in the alleged establishment of a new Jewish underground. The suspects freed are Barukh Ben-Yosef, head of the Temple Mount Yeshiva in Jerusalem, and Yisra'el Fuchs, a Ma'ale Adumim student at the yeshiva.

Civilians Reportedly Killed Near Ramallah

TA2212103593 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1030 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] Two Israeli civilians were shot and killed about one hour ago in the village of Bayt'unya, near Ramallah. Our correspondent Moti Amir reports that the two were

driving in a Renault station wagon. The authorities suspect that terrorists stopped the car and shot them at close range.

Massive IDF [Israel Defense Forces] and police forces have been summoned to the site.

Iranians Arrested With Forged Israeli Passports

TA2212123293 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 22 Dec 93 p A1

[Report by Arab affairs correspondent Gay Bekhor]

[Text] Dozens of young Iranian citizens have been arrested in recent months in various cities around the world after attempting to board commercial flights using Israeli passports, some of which were stolen but most were forged.

At this stage, it remains unknown whether an official Iranian body, connected with either intelligence or terrorism is behind the spate of passport forgeries. The motive of the youths using the passports also remains unclear. Most of the passports were printed in Istanbul. Some of the passports were expert forgeries, while the work on others was slipshod. The main question bothering the Israeli security services is whether Iran is trying to use Israeli passports to perpetrate terrorist attacks.

Despite claiming to have been born and raised in Israel, most of the Iranians arrested at various international airports while posing as Israelis could not speak a word of Hebrew and knew nothing about Judaism. In some cases, the personal details copied from the original passport did not even match the phony picture.

This phenomenon was exposed in May 1993, after information was received about two Iranian citizens who purchased forged Israeli passports on one of the Greek islands. In late July, additional intelligence reports were received on Iranian nationals in Istanbul dealing in forged Israeli passports.

In light of this information, a series of arrests were carried out at various airports. In August, a group of Iranian and Iraqi youths were arrested on the Greek island of Samos. Of them, 18 were found to be in possession of forged Israeli passports. The forgeries were extremely crude and noticeable. At the beginning of October, eight Iranians with forged Israeli passports were arrested in Singapore, and a short time later, another Iranian citizen was apprehended in Madrid with an Israeli passport. At the end of October, another four Iranians with forged Israeli passports were caught on the border between Iran and Turkey.

Israeli passports enjoy a high degree of credibility in the eyes of the international authorities, and that is apparently the reason the Iranians prefer to use them.

Knesset Member Returns From Talks in Azerbaijan

TA2112113793 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 21 Dec 93 p A3

[Report by political correspondent Aluf Ben]

[Excerpt] Azerbaijani President Geydar Aliyev is interested in developing and expanding bilateral relations with Israel. Aliyev said this in a meeting with Labor Knesset Member Efrayim Sne, who returned from a three-day visit to Baku last week.

Sne, who was officially invited to Baku, is the first Israeli political figure to visit the former Soviet republic. Sne met with President Aliyev, Secretary of State Lale Gadzhiyeva, and the deputy assembly chairman. Sne's visit was given wide coverage by the local television and press.

Following his visit, Sne remarked that "there is a lot of room in Azerbaijan for activity by Israeli companies and individuals. This country is very interested in developing economic and cultural ties with Israel. Azerbaijan never experienced any anti-Semitism and has warm feelings toward the Azerbaijani Jewish community in Israel." [passage omitted]

Aviation Agreement Signed With Cypriot Minister

TA2112090993 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 0730 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] An Israel-Cyprus aviation agreement was signed this morning by Transportation Minister Yisra'el Qeysar and his Cypriot counterpart. Foreign Minister Shim'on Peres also attended the signing ceremony. The Cypriot minister said his country is very interested in expanding aviation and economic relations with Israel. Minister Qeysar offered Cyprus Israeli know-how in the areas of air traffic control and supervision.

Commentary Analyzes Bobby Inman Appointment

TA2112163893 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 21 Dec 93 p B1

[Commentary from Washington by 'Aqiva Eldar]

[Text] It has recently become apparent that Saddam Husayn's joy at Bill Clinton's victory in the elections was slightly premature. Those who did not want to see George Bush in the White House will now get him in the Pentagon, in the form of Bobby Inman. When the new secretary of defense revealed that he had voted for Bush this was not just some incidental remark by a gruff navy veteran. In Washington, a man needs a great deal of nerve to declare that he had supported the Republican candidate just as the Democratic President is naming him the next secretary of defense.

This is indeed chutzpah, or perhaps rather the ability to discern that in the White House today, good connections

in the rival party count as definite political capital. Somebody checked and discovered that only 78 out of 258 members of the Democratic majority faction had supported their President in the two most important votes in the House of Representatives—on the budget, and on NAFTA [North American Free Trade Agreement]. The Brady amendment to limit the arms race among American citizens would also have been rejected without some support from the Republican flank. Had it not been for some key Republican figures, it is doubtful whether Clinton would have managed to regain, just before Christmas, the kind of popularity ratings he enjoyed before the whole affair of drafting homosexuals into the military came up.

Inman's appointment to a key cabinet position was more than a signal of goodwill and gratitude to the Republican minority whose services the President will need again for the vote on the health system reforms—one of the most important and difficult challenges Clinton has set for himself; the major decisions, such as dispatching forces abroad, will continue to be made by the President himself. However, the choice of the conservative right-wing Texan, the former secret service man, is in step with the Democratic Administration's steady adoption of the policies set by its Republican predecessors on almost all issues of foreign policy and national security.

The best known and most tangible example of this is the Madrid conference, which the Clinton Administration cleaved to as though it was Warren Christopher's, and not James Baker's, initiative. Even Dennis Ross, who moved to the White House with Baker in order to pull Bush out of the mud, was asked to stay and was even promoted. Acting on the principle that it is better to take on failure and put up with success, Clinton is focusing his efforts on domestic issues, where Bush failed and wasted the vast credit he had gained during the Gulf war and at the subsequent Madrid conference.

During the last days with the Administration prior to his retirement (or dismissal), outgoing Secretary of Defense Les Aspin had been busy with the integration of women in ground based elite combat units. Inman is made of other stuff, people who believe in a "strong America" and with this goal in mind know how to operate CIA agents throughout the Third World. Equal rights for women or homosexuals are about as interesting for them as human rights violations in Guatemala. This approach seems to be catching on in the Clinton Administration: a stern attitude toward regimes which threaten U.S. interests (Iraq, Iran, North Korea), an indulgent approach toward tyrants seeking to improve relations with the West (Hafiz al-Asad and Boris Yeltsin), and vacillation with regard to crises where the United States has no direct interests (Bosnia, Somalia, Haiti, and Burundi).

When Clinton was nominated President, Israeli experts warned that a Democratic administration would not tolerate violations of human rights in the territories. It was also expected that al-Asad will be among those punished by the administration for which the observation of human rights is of supreme importance. The State Department's annual report on human rights around the world will be published next month. One can safely assume that although Israel and Syria will feature prominently in the report this year as well, this fact will not have even the slightest effect on the administration's Middle East policy. Clinton knows full well that the support of the peace lovers in Washington and Manhattan at this time will not be enough to guarantee his reelection.

As long as the peace process is alive, though breathing heavily, the American public, media, and politicians are not really bothered when several dozen Jews or Arabs are killed in the territories. Last year, 454 people were murdered in the U.S. capital alone. The Americans want their government to protect their children on the way to the grocer's. They are not interested in sending troops to Port-au-Prince or hearing about the importance of democracy for Haiti. Incidentally, Aspin, who paid with his head for the failures of the foreign policy, opposed sending the ship to the island's shores. When the time comes to send troops to the Golan Heights, Clinton will have to find very good reasons for it.

Although it is true that with Aspin leaving, Israel is losing a sworn friend of Israel in the Pentagon, even he could not twist the arms of the chiefs of staff who rejected Israel's requests in view of the competition over the shrinking budgetary cake. Inman's "Israeli" record is not clear enough (the rumor that he had attended fund raising campaigns for the Jewish National Fund is still being examined). His associates have said that the man has a broad strategic view, and added that he will contribute to restraining the tendencies of separatism and focusing on domestic issues. The Middle East peace process may profit from Inman's joining the senior staff of the U.S. defense and foreign policymakers. His opening stand, mainly his independence—expressed by his disclosure of his vote—allows the new secretary a unique status. Paying close attention to (Reserves) Admiral Bob Inman is worth it.

Husayn, Al-Asad Discuss Peace Process on Phone

JN2112211493 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn held a telephone conversation with his brother Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad, during which they exchanged views on various regional and international issues, particularly the latest developments in the peace process.

The two leaders stressed the need for coordination between the two fraternal countries in order to unify stands toward the peace process and its developments in support of the unified Arab position and out of concern for the nation, its rights, and the future of its generations concerning a just, comprehensive, and lasting peace in the region.

Prime Minister Returns From Japan, Malaysia

JN2112064493 Amman Radio Jordan in English 0530 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Prime Minister 'Abd-al-Salam al-Majali has returned home from a working visit to Japan and Malaysia. During the 11-day trip, Dr. al-Majali met with Japan's emperor and handed him a message from His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan, the regent. Discussions with the emperor and senior Japanese officials dealt with Middle East peace development and bilateral ties, with particular emphasis on the economic side.

The Middle East and bilateral relations were also the center of talks that the premier held in Malaysia with senior officials there. Accompanying Dr. al-Majali was Minister of Information Jawad al-'Anani, who returned with the premier at dawn today.

Qatari Minister of Education Received in Amman

Meets With King Husayn

JN2112170793 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1600 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] His Majesty King Husayn received Qatari Education Minister 'Abd-al-'Aziz Bin-'Abdallah al-Turki at the Royal Court today. The minister conveyed to the king greetings from his brother [Qatari Amir] His Highness Shaykh Khalifah Bin-Hamad Al Thani.

The two sides exchanged views on various regional and international issues and relations between the two fraternal countries, means of promoting them, and ways to clear the Arab atmosphere, particularly at this delicate stage through which the nation is passing.

Education Minister Dr. Khalid al-'Umari and the Qatari ambassador in Amman attended the meeting.

Meets With Prince Hasan

JN2112130493 Amman Radio Jordan in English 1200 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hasan has received visiting Qatari Minister of Education, Mr. 'Abd-al-'Aziz al-Turki, and members of his accompanying delegation. Mr. al-Turki described the Jordanian-Qatari relations as strategic, and he praised Jordan's experience in the scope of educational process. He also hailed the role of the Arab Thought Forum, which is headed by Crown Prince Hasan. The Qatari minister expressed hope for the promotion of relations between Jordan and Qatar in various fields.

During the meeting, the Qatari minister was briefed by his royal highness on a number of ideas with regards to the relations between and Jordan and Qatar. The crown prince also called for the promotion of cooperation between the two countries.

Departs Amman 21 Dec

JN2112200693 Amman Jordan Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Qatari Education Minister 'Abd-al-'Aziz Bin-'Abdallah al-Turki left Amman today following his visit to Jordan.

UN Asked To 'Verify' Israel's Deportation Policy

JN2112193893 Amman PETRA-JNA in Arabic 1645 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Amman, 21 Dec (PETRA)—The House of Representatives has appealed to international organizations headed by the United Nations to verify, on a permanent basis, Israel's commitment as an occupation force to respect the principles of human rights and to stop deportation and expulsion policies. This is contained in a statement the House issued today on the subject of Palestinians deported to Marj al-Zuhur who have returned to their homeland. The following is the text of the statement:

A year ago the House of Representatives followed up the issue of the Palestinian deportees, whose determination to reject the policy of expulsion has played an effective role in moving the international community. This has compelled Israel to implement the UN Security Council's resolution on this issue.

While noting that Israel's commitment to returning the deportees to their homeland in accordance with UN Security Council Resolution No. 799 of 1992 has come late, after a long period of time during which the deportees suffered from tough conditions outside their homeland, the House of Representatives views Israel's resort to repressive measures against some of them, in terms of arrest, interrogation, and restriction of their freedom, as another Israeli violation of an issue that is one of the

international community's most important priorities, i.e., complete and accurate respect for human rights and basic freedoms.

While calling on Israel to fully implement the aforementioned resolution calling for the deportees' right to return, for respecting their humanism, and for not encroaching on their civil rights, the House of Representatives calls on the international community—at this particular stage in which the region and its peoples are under test and in which all parties' credibility concerning their commitment to achieving a just and comprehensive peace is being tested—stressing that one of the conditions for achieving peace is that Israel, as an occupation force, should respect the rights of all the inhabitants of the occupied Arab territories and stop all mean of repression and persecution against these citizens and their right to live in peace in their homeland.

The House of Representatives calls on all the international organizations headed by the United Nations to verify on a permanent basis Israel's commitment as an occupation force to respect the principles of human rights and to stop the policies of deportation and expulsion.

Shipping Sources: Iraqi Ports Decision 'Worrying'

JN2112125293 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 21 Dec 93 p 3

[By a JORDAN TIMES staff reporter]

[Excerpt] Amman—Jordanian officials and shipping agents are planning to raise the impact of the reopening of the Iraqi port of Umm Qasr on the Jordanian port and transport sectors during the visit next week of the Iraqi transport minister, officials and shipping sources said Monday.

The minister, Ahmad Murtada, is expected here on Dec. 27 on his way to attend a Dec. 29 meeting of the Arab League transport ministers' council in Cairo, officials said.

"We hope to discuss with the minister Iraq's plans to use Umm Qasr for its imports and its options," said a senior official.

The official, who preferred anonymity, said the al-'Aqabah Ports Corporation and shipping agents as well as Jordan's transport sector were worried that the flow of Iraq-bound cargo through al-'Aqabah could go down from the already depressed level, and deliver further blows to the national economy.

At the same time, Jordan respects Iraq's rights to use its own facilities and ports, the official said.

"We will have to find some common ground to ensure that the interests of all sides are protected in a reasonable manner," said the official.

The Jordan Shipping Agents Association (JSAA), the umbrella body for all shipping agents in the Kingdom, said it was studying the situation.

"We have no comment at this point in time except that we are assessing and evaluating the impact of the reopening of Umm Qasr port on Jordan's economy and transport sector in general and the shipping sector in particular," said Sufyan Muhaysin, manager of the association.

"We will be issuing a series of recommendations soon," he told the Jordan Times.

Other shipping sources said the situation was worrying, particularly that Iraqi imports through al-'Aqabah had already gone down dramatically since 1992, after shipowners as well as importers were discouraged by the overzealous inspections of vessels by enforcers of the international sanctions against Iraq.

The volume of Iraq-bound cargo has declined to less than one-third since most Iraqi importers have moved base from Joran to Turkey or even Iran, they said.

Al-'Aqabah became the main life-line for Iraqi imports after Iraq's ports were closed shortly after the Iran-Iraq war broke out in 1980. [passage omitted]

Christopher's Talks in Syria Assessed

NC2212114093 Beirut AL-SHIRA' in Arabic 20 Dec 93 pp 8-9

[Text] U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has brought three positive elements [thalath ijabiyat] to Damascus and presented them to President Hafiz al-Asad during their second meeting, which followed the secretary's shuttle visits to Syria and Israel. Christopher met the Zionist enemy prime minister twice.

The first positive element is the U.S. guarantee of a complete Israeli withdrawal from the Golan as Syrian land. There is no ambiguity about Syria's historic right over Arabism and the Syrian identity.

The second element is represented in the U.S. pledge to remove Syria's name from the list of countries sponsoring terrorism. This list was approved by the U.S. Congress and adhered to by previous administrations during the terms of Presidents Reagan and Bush. This list remains in force during President Bill Clinton's term.

The third element concerns the U.S. political recognition of the Syrian role in Lebanon, consolidation of Syrian-Lebanese ties, and recognition of all treaties and documents and their addenda signed between Lebanon and Syria.

The U.S. Administration's demands of the Zionist enemy following in-depth deliberations focus on three vital issues:

The first demand concerns normalizing relations between the Zionist enemy and Syria in return for an Israeli pledge to effect a complete withdrawal from occupied Syrian territory. This should commence with a joint Syrian-Israeli declaration of principles containing these two steps.

Israel believes, according to Christopher, that the full withdrawal is a clear-cut expression, while there is a misunderstanding with Syria about the concept of the comprehensive peace. From the Israeli viewpoint, normal relations should be set up with Syria including the exchange of ambassadors after embassies are opened in Jerusalem and Damascus. This comes in addition to opening consulates in Syrian and Israeli cities like Aleppo, Tel Aviv, Latakia, and Haifa.

Also, Israel demands that normal economic relations be established with Syria. This step should begin by canceling the Arab boycott, particularly the Syrian boycott, and allowing the free exchange of commodities, movement of individuals, opening of telephone lines and airports, and the movement of their companies' airliners between the two countries.

The second demand, which was brought by Christopher from Jerusalem, is to have Syria approve Israel's share of the water of the plains, valleys, and slopes of the Golan, particularly the triangle that links Lebanon, Syria, and Palestine at the slopes of Mount Hermon.

The third demand concerns the reduction in the number and materiel of the Syrian forces and Syria confining its formations' tasks to internal security affairs, with the forces not exceeding 150,000 troops. Also, Israel demands that the chemical and germ weapons in Syria be destroyed (or reduced).

The U.S. secretary of state pledged on behalf of his Administration to deploy U.S. forces within multinational (or United Nations, as Syria wishes) forces along the border between Syria and occupied Palestine. The Syrian wish will be studied and in return the Zionist nuclear force will be reduced and subjected to international supervision. The Israeli forces will be reduced within the border to which Israel will withdraw after pulling out from the Golan.

According to informed Arab sources, Syria's principled approval has been prepared and something similar to the preliminaries has been completed. What remains is the final approval after an important and crucial meeting between President Hafiz al-Asad and Bill Clinton in Geneva on 16 January 1994.

PSP Decries Bombing of Phalangist Headquarters

NC2212072793 Shanayh Voice of the Mountain in Arabic 0530 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Excerpts] The Progressive Socialist Party [PSP] has denounced the aggression [against the headquarters of the Phalangist Party] that shook Lebanon's political life and reminded the Lebanese of the tragedies of war at a time when the country is stabilizing and taking big strides to build civil peace and restore internal dialogue.

A PSP statement said the bombing goes beyond the Phalangist Party, threatens the future, warns of dire consequences, and again calls for vigilance against the suspect forces and tools whose imprints have begun to appear on events and moves designed to shake stability while the tone of the sectarian political language is getting sharper. [passage omitted]

In another statement—on death sentences in Egypt—the PSP says: Bloody confrontations between the Islamic forces and the state in Egypt are escalating. Many people are being killed and wounded. Court trials are held and death sentences are passed against many young Egyptians without considering the political, economic, and historical reasons that have created this situation in Egypt since Camp David.

The statement adds: While denouncing these execution campaigns, the PSP regrets this method of dealing with the political opposition, whatever its inclinations. The party also demands abandoning state violence and stresses that the judicial system must distinguish between common crimes and acts of political, national, and pan-Arab struggle. [passage omitted]

Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council Holds Meetings

Al-Asad, al-Hirawi Sign Documents

JN2112155993 Damascus SANA in Arabic 1530 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Excerpts] Damascus, 21 Dec (SANA)—Lebanese President Ilyas al-Hirawi arrived in Damascus at 1100 today to attend the meeting of the Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council. [passage omitted]

As soon as the two presidents arrived at the People's Palace, the Higher Council held a meeting. Attending the meeting from the Syrian side were People's Assembly Speaker 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah, Prime Minister Mahmud al-Zu'bi, and Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs. Attending from the Lebanese were Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, and Deputy Prime Minister Michel al-Murr. The meeting was also attended by Nasri Khuri, secretary general of the Higher Council.

During the meeting, Presidents al-Asad and al-Hirawi signed three documents, which are:

1. The bylaws and financial system of the Higher Council.
2. The Higher Council's 1994 budget.
3. The agenda of the Follow-up and Coordination Committee's meeting, held in Beirut on 15-16 September 1993.

Leaders Discuss 'Future Steps'

JN2112213693 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2115 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] The Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council resumed its meetings at 1815 today under Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Ilyas al-Hirawi.

Attending the meeting on the Syrian side were 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, the vice president; 'Abd-al-Qadir Qaddurah, People's Assembly speaker; Mahmud al-Zu'bi, the prime minister; Dr. Salim Yasin, deputy prime minister for economic affairs; and Faruq al-Shar', the foreign minister.

On the Lebanese side the meeting was attended by Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri, Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri, and Deputy Prime Minister Michel al-Murr.

The Higher Council conducted a general review of the political conditions in the world and the region and discussed matters related to the peace process and its future steps in the next month.

Conferees were in full agreement on the need to continue cooperation between Syria and Lebanon in working for the just and comprehensive peace that would guarantee the rights of all parties.

Strength of Relations Viewed

JN2212085593 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0545 GMT 22 Dec 93

[From the press review]

[Text] In a commentary today, the newspaper TISHRIN addresses the meetings of the Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council under Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Ilyas al-Hirawi, affirming that the current talks will not only address the means of promoting bilateral cooperation. They will also, the paper adds, address the coordination of stands toward the peace process, particularly since the summit due to be held in Geneva between Presidents al-Asad and Clinton is extremely important. As a matter of fact, this summit could mark a junction in the overall peace process, the paper argues.

TISHRIN notes the Syrian-Lebanese ties, which were baptized in blood throughout the Lebanese civil strife, saying that these ties have become a mark of excellence, thanks to the efforts made by the one people in both countries. Moreover, these ties have reflected positively and favorably on the two fraternal countries. The bilateral agreements signed yesterday, in addition to the agreements signed in the past, will consecrate economic integration between the two countries, which is in the interest of Syrians and Lebanese alike.

TISHRIN adds: It is only natural that the talks between Presidents al-Asad and al-Hirawi should focus on the peace issue, not to mention the need to further promote fraternal bilateral cooperation. For the peace issue is a top priority for both countries. Both countries have been engaged in arduous talks over the past two years to ensure the implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425.

TISHRIN goes on to say: However, expansionist Israel has scuttled all efforts and flouted all proposals. It has not hesitated to launch large-scale aggressive attacks on Lebanon to make it forget about Resolution 425, drop its demand for just and comprehensive peace on all fronts of the conflict, and consequently halt the coordination with Syria.

Concluding its commentary, TISHRIN says: While Israel was promoting separate deals and attempting to sow the seeds of mistrust among the parties to the same cause, the unified stand of Syria and Lebanon held out in the face of these malicious Israeli endeavors, whereas the Palestinians fell in the trap and paid an exorbitant price undermining the Palestinian people's rights, aspirations, and blood. This is the result of their falling in the Israeli trap. Firm convictions have been reached that there can be no peace in the Middle East without Syria and Lebanon. As a matter of fact, the summit due to be held between Presidents al-Asad and Clinton in Geneva in mid-January is a manifestation of these convictions. Hence, the constant coordination between the two fraternal countries has not only safeguarded their rights, but also opened the eyes of influential international parties

to the soundness of the Syrian-Lebanese perspective regarding the nature of the peace that needs to be achieved in the Middle East.

Commentary: Lebanon Focus of Talks With Clinton

JN2112154593 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Station commentary]

[Text] Gentlemen: Presidents Hafiz al-Asad and Ilyas al-Hirawi and ranking Syrian and Lebanese officials will meet today within the framework of the Higher Syrian-Lebanese Council meetings. They will assess the bilateral march of fraternity and cooperation, discuss possible horizons of bilateral cooperation, and coordinate positions, especially concerning the peace process.

In fact, Syrian-Lebanese cooperation has taken large strides, proved its usefulness, and met the interests of both Syrian and Lebanese citizens. No one in the two countries doubts the usefulness of this cooperation. Syrian and Lebanese citizens aspire for more cooperation in various fields to realize economic integration, in light of their interwoven and mutual interests. Undoubtedly, the agreements concluded between the two countries reflect well on them in all fields. The higher council meetings today are expected to result in additional fruitful agreements.

What definitely concerns the two countries is the future of peace in the region. All know Syria and Lebanon have positively responded to the U.S. initiative. They have participated in the Madrid conference and the Washington talks on the basis of Security Council resolutions, namely, Resolutions 242 and 338 as far as Syria is concerned, and Resolution 425 as far as Lebanon is concerned, and on the principle of land for peace.

After the United States committed itself to realizing a just and comprehensive peace on all fronts of the conflict, and after two years of difficult talks in Washington, no progress was made on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. The delegations of the two countries were confronted with increasing Israeli intransigence and the Tel Aviv rulers' refusal to implement the resolutions of international legitimacy. During this period, Israel practiced clear blackmail with regard to Lebanon. This blackmail went beyond mere threats. Israel launched a series of air raids and aggressions, including the large and brutal aggression against south Lebanon. That aggression came close to wiping out the entire peace process. It forced U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher to come to the region to rescue the peace process. Lebanon has always found absolute support in Syria, which was ready to intervene and sacrifice if things had then reached the point of no return. President al-Asad has announced on every occasion that Syria will continue to support Lebanon in bad and good times alike.

When Secretary Christopher embarked on his recent visit to the region, south Lebanon and the Golan were the focus of his talks with President Hafiz al-Asad. Syria is concerned about south Lebanon, as it is concerned about its land. It will not relinquish a grain of soil from either country. Syria calls for Israel's full withdrawal from the Golan and south Lebanon. Syria supported Lebanon at the United Nations and confronted the attempt to remove Security Council Resolution 425 on south Lebanon from the General Assembly's draft resolution. South Lebanon will be the focus of President al-Asad attention when he meets with U.S. President Clinton in Geneva.

Lebanon has the right to receive President al-Asad's attention. It is Syria's duty to defend Lebanese rights. Syria and Lebanon are one people in two states. They share a joint security and destiny. The bloody events of the civil war proved Syria was as pained as Lebanon. It had been the only support for Lebanon throughout the crisis. Without Syria's constant support and unlimited assistance, Lebanon would not now be healthy and Israel would have succeeded in implementing its divisive designs and imposing the ill-omened 17 May agreement.

When Syria rejects the policy of separate deals and insists on the objective of a just and comprehensive peace on all fronts of the conflict, it focuses on south Lebanon, as well as the other occupied territories. Undoubtedly, Syrian-Lebanese coordination on the peace process will bear fruit, no matter how Israel maneuvers. The policy of separate deals proved to be a failure. Those who signed the Oslo agreement and deviated from the unified Arab position and the constants of the just and comprehensive solution are reaping bitter fruit today.

Christopher did not come to the region and did not speak about the importance of making progress on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks until he felt the setback in the Oslo agreement, and until he was sure there will be no peace in the Middle East without Syria and Lebanon. Observers all over the world agree that the summit meeting between Presidents al-Asad and Clinton is an open recognition of the importance of Syria and its basic role in the region. Syria has made it clear that peace is pinned on Israel's full withdrawal, and that withdrawal should include south Lebanon.

It is certain that Presidents al-Asad and al-Hirawi will discuss in today's meetings coordinating the two countries' stances in a manner that will make Lebanon present in Geneva summit even if its president is absent.

India

Editorial Views Ties With U.S.

BK2212110793 Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English 15 Dec 93 p 8

[Editorial: "Repairing Friendships"]

[Text] Senator Larry Pressler's statement at a press conference on Monday [13 December] that the United States' administration was unlikely to repeal his amendment to the Foreign Assistance Act under which US economic and military aid to Pakistan remains blocked, should help to undo some of the damage caused to Indo-US relations by earlier reports to the contrary. Yet, India has been so jolted in recent months by dramatic shifts in US postures and unfriendly pronouncements by US officials like Robin Raphel, that it would rather wait and watch how events actually unfold. Senator Hank Brown, who visited India along with Senators Pressler and Thad Cochrane, told the same press conference which Pressler addressed on Monday, that Raphel's observation did not reflect US policy. Whether it did reflect US policy or not, Raphel's statement that Washington did not accept the applicability of the Instrument of Accession to Kashmir, did undermine Indo-US relations and it would take quite a lot of effort to set things right again.

Much would depend here on the line the US takes on issues like Pakistan's sponsorship of terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir, the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and economic cooperation. The statement by the Senators that trade between the two countries would prosper even if India did not sign the NPT reflects sound thinking. India has repeatedly made it known that while it stood committed to peaceful use of atomic energy, it would not sign the NPT because the latter is discriminatory and biased in favour of the nuclear nations which will retain their nuclear arsenal while the non-nuclear nations will be barred from having theirs. Unfortunately all the three Senators are Republicans and US policy is made and implemented by the Democratic administration headed by President Bill Clinton which, to put it mildly, has been sending confusing signals. Nor has it enhanced its own credibility on the non-proliferation issue by turning a blind eye to continued nuclear weapons testing by China and carrying on as if nothing had happened.

Equally, while India is being asked to throw the door open to US exports, Indian exports to the US continue to be subjected to discriminatory tariff regulations. In this context, the US administration's reported move to delay the dismantling of the multifibre arrangement which restricts textile imports to the US to fixed quotas, is bound to be resented in this country. Prime Minister Narasimha Rao did well to raise the issue with the US Senators and also make a fairly direct reference to the impact of Robin Raphel's statement on mutual ties. Such steps, however, need to be followed up by a clear demonstration of India's resolve not to succumb to American pressure on matters like Kashmir and talks with Pakistan. A visit by Rao to the United States, which the visiting US Senators favoured, should be undertaken with this purpose in mind and in conveying that friendship between the two countries must be based on equality.

West Bengal Chief Criticizes GATT

BK2212040093 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] The West Bengal chief minister, Mr. Jyoti Basu, has said that liberalization may be necessary, but the large-scale import of foreign technology may not be in the interest of the country. Opening the seventh industrial trade fair in Calcutta, he criticized the center's stand on the GATT agreement, particularly the Dunkel proposals. He said if the Dunkel proposals are accepted, it will adversely affect the country's agriculture, pharmaceuticals industry, and research and development.

Soldiers Reportedly Killed in Kashmir

BK2112143293 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1400 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] In occupied Kashmir, 23 Indian soldiers, including a captain, were killed and several injured in two separate landmine explosions. Reports say the incidents happened when the vehicles carrying Indian troops hit mines in Kupwara and Karna. The mines were laid by mojahedin. After the incidents, Indian troops went on a shooting spree and gunned down four Kashmiri youths in Kupwara. Another five people were killed by Indian troops in random shooting at various places across the valley, including Srinagar and Anantnag Islamabad. Indian troops also made several arrests. Three explosions have also been reported from Arina area of Jammu Province. Several houses were damaged in the explosion.

Meanwhile, people In Kishtwar area have decided to stage protest demonstration against the continuing curfew clamped several days ago.

Two 'Pakistan-Trained' Militants Arrested

BK2212041893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, security forces have arrested two Pakistan-trained militants from Jammu city, including Farooq Ahmad Malla—area commander of a militant outfit. They had fled from Sopor in the wake of the pressure mounted by the security forces and were on their way to Ahmedabad. An official spokesman said in Jammu that another notorious militant, Colonel Haider, was arrested in Jammu on Sunday [19 December]. Two girls kidnapped from Kashmir have been recovered from Jammu by the security forces.

Malaysia's Mahathir Views G-15 Prospects

BK1712121393 Kuala Lumpur NEW STRAITS TIMES in English 16 Dec 93 p 6

[Text] New Delhi, Wednesday [15 December]—Prime Minister Datuk Sri Dr. Mahathir Mohamed said he is confident the G-15 [Group of 15] can be revitalised to make it more meaningful to members and at the same time beneficial to all developing countries.

Dr. Mahathir said the summit next year would audit activities of the four-year-old G-15 to convince members of the importance and relevance of the grouping.

He and the other G-15 leaders—Indian Prime Minister Narasimha Rao and Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe—were disappointed that some of the leaders lacked commitment to the cause of South-South co-operation

"During our consultations, we agreed that we have to work to ensure that the next summit will be held," he said at a press conference at the end of his four-day bilateral visit, reclassified as such after the G-15 summit was postponed.

Dr. Mahathir said he hoped there would be a quorum—10 heads of government—so that the meeting would be able to decide on the future of the grouping.

"We cannot do anything until we meet," he said.

To a question, he said he was unaware that some countries had come under some pressure not to attend the December 13-15 fourth summit in the Indian capital. The other members of the G-15 are Algeria, Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, Indonesia, Jamaica, Mexico, Nigeria, Peru, Senegal, Venezuela, Zimbabwe, and Chile.

On the agreement achieved between the world's biggest traders—the United States and the European Community—in the seven-year Uruguay Round of the GATT talks, paving the way for the largest-ever trade deal, the prime minister said he was happy.

"The signing of the agreement will lead to an orderly world trade which is what is needed for growth—otherwise there will be anarchy as people will put up more protective barriers which is not good for any of us," he said.

Dr. Mahathir said even though only the voices of the big countries counted in the negotiations, their decisions were unlikely to be unfavourable to the smaller nations.

On the other hand, he said with an orderly world trade regime, small countries would no longer face barriers in trading internationally.

"There will no longer be unilateral action of the protectionist kind," he added.

On the Nonaligned Movement, he said Malaysia and India were active members and both felt that there should be more than just one force in this world.

"If we have a unipolar world, maybe it will not be so good for smaller countries," he said.

An Indian journalist asked what provocations had led to the weapons buying spree by the Southeast Asian countries.

The prime minister said there was no provocation. What the countries, which became independent almost at the same time, were doing was merely to buy new weapons as what they had were already out of date.

"In the case of Malaysia, it is just that we are a little richer now and therefore we are buying a little more and more sophisticated weapons," he said.

To another question by an Indian journalist about the Moro problem in southern Philippines and what Malaysia thought of it, Dr. Mahathir said Malaysia, as far as possible did not interfere in the internal affairs of another country.

He said the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) had just held talks in Jakarta with representatives of Philippine President Fidel Ramos.

"According to MNLF leader Nur Misuari, who came to see me after the meeting, he was quite happy with the result of the talks."

Later, responding to questions from reporters on arrival at Subang Airport this evening, Dr. Mahathir said he believed that the majority of the G-15 members were still committed to the group although they were unable to attend the proposed summit in India, forcing its postponement.

He said most of the G-15 leaders had to attend to more pressing matters in their respective countries which had prevented them from attending the summit.

Asked whether there was any truth in a British Broadcasting Corporation's report that some of the leaders had been influenced by the United States to stay away from the summit, Dr. Mahathir said he did not receive any such information and therefore would not want to make any assumption.

He said for instance, Argentina, which is supposed to hold the meeting after India, had expressed willingness to hold the summit and Zimbabwe had asked to organize the meeting after Argentina.

However, he said India would still hold next year's summit meeting either in late March or early April.

He said members would also decide whether the summit in Argentina should also be held next year, twice in a year because of the postponement of the summit in India, or in 1995.

On his visit to India, Dr. Mahathir said it had given the opportunity for him to hold bilateral discussions with Rao and President Mugabe. He said the Malaysian delegation also held discussions with Indian government and private sector representatives.

He said six memorandums of understanding were signed between the governments and the private sector of the two countries.

Article Reviews Economic Policies

BK1912063393 Delhi PATRIOT in English 8 Dec 93 p 4

[Article by Badar Alam Iqbal]

[Text] In the eighties, the Indian economy failed in many areas, particulary in production, productivity and exports. Therefore, an action plan known as the "New Economic Policy" was announced to revive the economy and to put it on a sound track. Now it is worthwhile to know in what direction the economy is moving since the new policy was announced over two years ago.

Let us first examine trends in the performance of the agricultural sector with particular reference to foodgrains. In June 1992, India's total rice production stood at 8.4 million tonnes and it went up to 10.5 million tonnes in June 1993, registering an overall rise of nearly 25 per cent which is considered to be good enough. Between June 1992 and June 1993, the total wheat output recorded an overall rise of 151 per cent i.e. from 5.9 million tonnes to 15.0 million tonnes. This has been due to normal rainfall. The most noteworthy feature has been that procurement far outstrips offtake. But the public distribution system (PDS) has not been able to derive adequate benefit from the record procurement of foodgrains as the figures for offtake indicate downward trends. In 1991-92, offtake was 4.5 million tonnes and it declined to 4.2 million tonnes in 1992-93. In 1993-94 it has gone down further to 31.1 per cent. This shows that the PDS has not done well and needs immediate attention of the government.

Next comes the industrial sector. New industrial production trends are of an erratic and disturbing nature. From May 1991 to May 1992 industrial production in general recorded a rise of 4.7 per cent and from May 1992 and May 1993 only of 3.9 per cent.

Production trends in the mining sector are very disappointing. Between May 1991 and 1992 production registered a considerable rise of 12.3 per cent, but between May 1992 and May 1993 it registered a negative growth of -8.0 which is certainly alarming.

Production trends in the manufacturing sector are better. During the period, production recorded a marginal rise of 0.6 per cent i.e. from 3.4 per cent to 5.0 per cent.

The third vital facet is the performance of infrastructure which includes coal, electricity, petroleum, steel, cement and fertilisers. Coal production showed a marginal rise of four per cent i.e. from 16.1 million tonnes in 1992 to 16.8 million tonnes in 1993 (April). Electricity generation has a slight edge over coal as it witnessed an increase of six per cent i.e. from 24,587 million kwh [kilowatt-hour] to 26,153 million kwh during the period. The performance of the petroleum sector is not encouraging as both crude petroleum and petroleum products recorded a marginal decline of six per cent and two per cent respectively between April 1992 and April 1993. The total output of crude petroleum went down from 2,352 million tonnes to 2,211 million tonnes and the total production of petroleum products went down from 4,175 million tonnes to 4,101 million tonnes.

Some other vital areas have done fairly well. Saleable steel production recorded an increase of six per cent in 1993 over 1992 i.e from 781 million tonnes to 830 million tonnes. Cement production registered a rise of seven per cent i.e. from 4,447 thousand tonnes to 4,776 thousand tonnes between 1992 and 1993. The total production of nitrogenous increased from 505 thousand tonnes in 1992 to 525 thousand tonnes in 1993, registering an increase of four per cent. The total output of P2 [expansion unknown] and 05 [expansion unknown] recorded a decline of 33 per cent i.e. from 160 thousand tonnes to 108 thousand tonnes, leading to an overall decline in the total output of fertilisers.

The encouraging trend in exports in the first month of the current financial year continued in May 1993. India did record an appreciable rise of 27 per cent in its growth of exports in dollar terms during the first two months of the current financial year as compared to the corresponding period of 1992.

Total exports in dollar terms during April-May 1993 stood at 3,459 million U.S. dollars as compared to 2,667 million U.S. dollars during the corresponding period last year. Imports in dollar terms during the period amounted to US $ 3,465 million as against US $3,612 million in April-May 1992 registering a decline of more than 4 per cent.

Trade deficit during the first two months of the current financial year is around 6.6 million U.S. dollars as against US $945 million in April-May 1992. However, after registering a positive trade balance for the third successive month, in May 1993 it was negative.

The trade balance in rupee terms amounts to Rs. [rupees] 20.6 crore in April-May 1993 as against Rs. 2,715 crore in April-May 1992. This shows that the year began with a very encouraging export trend. If the trend continues, the export target of 20 per cent growth during 1993-94 could be achieved.

The latest data released by the Government shows more positive trends. India has maintained an appreciable rise in its total exports during April-July 1993 and as a result trade deficit in April-July 1993 has shrunk. Total exports between April and July 1993 amounted to US$6,916

million as against US$5,437 million during April-July 1992, registering an overall rise of more than 27 per cent in dollar terms.

In rupee terms, exports during April-July 1993 stood at Rs. 21,685 crore as compared to Rs. 15,562 crore last year, witnessing an impressive growth rate of more than 39 per cent which is really appreciable.

Imports during the period amounted to US$7,354 million as compared to US$7,559 million in April-July 1992, recording a decline of nearly three per cent. Imports in rupee terms during the period amounted to Rs. 23,058 crore as compared to Rs. 21,635 crore, recording a growth rate of nearly seven per cent.

It is clear that exports are increasing and would ease pressure on forex [foreign exchange] reserves and intended borrowings from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other bilateral sources and agencies. It is certainly a healthy feature of the economy.

India's forex reserves have been fluctuating between 1992 and 1993. In July 1992 these reserves stood at Rs. 17,000 crore and came down to the lowest level of Rs. 13,000 crore in November 1992 and thereafter started getting momentum and reached a record level of Rs. 21,000 crore in April 1993 and then started declining and touched a level of Rs. 20,000 crore in June 1993. This has been due to slower growth rate in exports in 1992. If the present growth rates in exports continue and efforts are made to maintain the existing rate of growth in exports then there is no doubt that India could maintain a high level of forex reserves and reduce its dependence on borrowings which is essential for the survival of the economy.

In regard to foreign currency assets, trends have been slightly better in 1993 (July end) as compared to 1992 (July end). In July 1992, total foreign currency assets stood at US$6.5 billion and went up to US$6.8 billion, registering a marginal rise of five per cent during the period.

Trends in regard to the rate of inflation have been encouraging as between 1992 and 1993 the inflation rate has gone down. According to data based on WPI [wholesale price index], in August 1992 the inflation rate stood at 9.7 point and went down to 5.9 point in 1993. Similarly, according to data based on CPI [consumer price index], in June 1992 the rate of inflation was nearly 13 per cent and declined to 5.9 point in June 1993.

Trends in regard to bank credit have been slightly better. In July 1992, total money supply recorded a rise of nearly seven per cent whereas in July 1993 the rate of growth was 6.5 per cent, recording a decline of 0.5 per cent. In July 1992 total net bank credit to the Government registered a rise of more than eight per cent. In July 1993 the figure shot up sharply and recorded a rise of nearly 22 per cent. This has been due to a sharp rise in Government spending during the eighth five-year plan.

In 1991-92, India's total external aid receipts stood at Rs. 720 crore and went down to Rs. 593 crore in 1992-93, witnessing a decline of 18 percent. Debt servicing liability went up considerably during 1991-92 and 1992-93. In 1991-92, total liability in the form of debt servicing amounted to Rs. 999 crore and went up to Rs. 1,337 crore in 1992-93.

It is clear that after the announcement of the New Economic Policy in July 1991, the economy has done slightly better. But it has to do still better for the development of the country. Some suggestions for better economic performance are: (a) Encouraging the export of agrobased products; (b) increasing capital formation; (c) expansion of bank credit for productive use; (d) demand management of resources; (e) maintaining higher growth rates in exports; (f) less dependence on bilateral borrowings; (g) reduction in government net RBI [Reserve Bank of India] credit to the government and its most optimum use; (h) strict monitoring on the flow of bank credit; and (i) higher allocation of resources to infrastructure and its most efficient use.

Committee Reports on Financial Scandal

BK2112161493 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] The Joint Parliamentary Committee [JPC] on the security scandal has severely indicted the Reserve Bank of India [RBI] and said the Finance Ministry failed to anticipate the problem and to respond to it purposefully. The committee held the view that the responsibility and accountability of the finance minister to Parliament cannot be denied. The principle of collective responsibility is equally applicable to other departments and ministries involved in the scam. The two-volume report presented to the Lok Sabha by the JPC chairman, Mr. Ram Nivas Mirdha, has no dissenting note. The report was tabled in the Rajya Sabha by Mr. S.S. Ahluwalia, a committee member. Both the ruling and opposition members of the 30-member JPC have given separate notes on certain aspects of the scam which are attached to the report. Several opposition members in both houses have demanded a discussion on the report.

Observing that the scam is a deliberate and criminal misuse of public funds, the JPC said there has been a close nexus between prominent industrial houses, banks, and brokers to illegally siphon off funds for speculative purposes. It said the CBI [Central Bureau of Investigation] failed to investigate the connection between brokers and various politically important persons. Sharply criticizing the way the public sector funds were invested, the JPC said both the administrative ministries and the Department of Public Enterprises failed in their duties. Two former petroleum ministers acting as ex-officio chairmen of the Oil Industry Development Board did not discharge their responsibilities properly. It also made some critical references against the then minister of state for revenue for some of his actions.

About the RBI, the report said the Apex Bank had turned a blind eye to the irregularities, which started surfacing from mid-eighties. It fixed the primary responsibility on the then deputy governor, Mr. Amitabh Ghosh, and passed strictures against another deputy governor, Mr. R. Janakiraman. The report said the then RBI governor must be held no less responsible for the irregularities in the banking system.

Decrying the lack of accountability in the banking system, the JPC came down heavily on foreign banks who, it said, treated the Reserve Bank in a casual manner. It suggested stringent penalties, including suspension of their licenses. The report also calls for parliamentary scrutiny of the entire banking system in the country. It criticized the bankers receipt system and also the misuse of portfolio management scheme by the public sector undertakings. It said the non-banking subsidiaries of the nationalized banks played a dubious role in the scam.

On the role of investigating agencies, the JPC expressed its displeasure over the inordinate delay in the CBI probe. It said the Central Board of Direct Taxes did not take proper follow-up action. The Enforcement Directorate also failed to show the requisite initiative.

On the 1 crore rupee payoff allegation of Harshad Mehta, the committee noted that the CBI did not register a case as the complaint did not disclose an offense. It also expressed the view that Harshad Mehta tried to mislead the committee during the course of his evidence and suggests an action against him for breach of privilege.

Noting that the different figures have been quoted for the total money involved in the scam, the JPC asked the Finance Ministry to set up a special team to trace the end use of the money within six months. It also recommended further action in the 2 crore rupees loan deal of the Hyderabad-based Gold Star Company with a Bombay broker. It suggested a CBI probe into the alleged leakage of the government decision to hike the coupon rate.

Addressing a news conference, the JPC chairman, Mr. Ram Nivas Mirdha, described the report as comprehensive. He denied that truth had become a victim of consensus reached by the committee. He said no one who needs to be indicted has been spared. A member of the JPC, Mr. Jaipal Reddy of the Janata Dal, who was present at the news conference, said suspicion cannot be the basis for an indictment. The Congress-I spokesman, Mr. V.N. Gadgil, has expressed happiness that the Joint Parliamentary Committee on the security scandal has presented unanimous report to the parliament.

Janata Dal-A Formally Splits From Janata Dal

BK2212035893 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] The Janata Dal-Ajit [A] has severed its ties with the Janata Dal. This was announced by Mr. Ajit Singh at a press conference in New Delhi yesterday. He said the Janata Dal-A is technically there and its political activities will be revived. Describing the unification effort as disastrous, he blamed the Bommai group for the failure. He said as a matter of fact some Janata Dal leaders did not want the Janata Dal-A to come into their fold. Mr. Ajit Singh said he was interested in the unification with a view to project the Janata Dal as the third force in National politics. Asked whether he will have any understanding with the SJP [Samajwadi Janata Party] leader, Mr. Chandra Shekhar, he said he will have wide discussions, and only time will tell.

Iran

President Presents Development Plan, Budget Bill

LD2112123893 Tehran IRNA in English 0820 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 21, IRNA—President 'Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani presented two bills on the second five-year development plan, to be launched on March 1994, and on the budget for the Iranian calendar year 1373 (to begin 21 March 1994) to the Majles here Tuesday [21 December].

The overall general budget for the next year amounts to rls. [rials] 33,768 billion.

Addressing the Majles while presenting the bills, the president said that given the existing realities in the present world, the government has made efforts to reduce the country's severe reliance on oil incomes.

Further on the second plan, the president said, "through implementation of policies to promote non-oil exports and by bringing into operation those sectors which reduce dependence on oil revenues, we have drastically reduced the serious need to petrodollars."

He assured that the Islamic Republic of Iran can continue with its development plans regardless of oil prices, adding that contrary to vicious propaganda of the enemies, "Iran is not reliant on crude prices as other petroleum exporting countries are."

According to the president, viewpoints of the leader of the Islamic revolution Ayatollah 'Ali Khamene'i have been included in the second plan, as points of view of the late leader Imam Khomeyni had been considered in the first plan.

Rafsanjani recommended Majles deputies and the mass media to inform the public of the achievements of the first plan and avoid solely magnifying the existing economic problems.

He stressed that in the second plan, as in the first, the emphasis is laid on preservation of the Islamic revolution and its values.

Turning to the foreign policy, the president noted that while the government is not seeking trouble at the same time it wishes to confront the existing genuine problems.

"We are doing our best to have a friendly attitude towards our neighbors so that no problem would be made for us from their side."

The 2nd plan, he said, has envisaged major projects with the objective to pave the way for future governments and future plans.

The Majles session was presided over by Majles Speaker 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri and attended by a number of ministers and vice presidents.

President Rafsanjani said that the proposed budget for the year 1373 totalling 79,686.7 billion rials showed substantial increase compared to the 1372 budget partly because of computing foreign exchange at floating rate instead of the official rate.

Rafsanjani said that general budget stood at 36,011.8 billion rials which he said was 41.6 percent more than this year's general budget.

The budget of state-owned firms, profit organizations affiliated to the government and banks has increased by 59.7 percent to 56,294.1 billion rials from this year's figure, he said.

Of this amount, he said, 50,034.41 billion rials is for government organizations, 1,043.2 billion rials for profit institutes affiliated to the government, and 5,216.5 billion rials for banks.

The president said the incomes stipulated in the 1373 budget bill have been estimated at 33,592 billion rials, showing a 42.8 percent increase from the figures aproved for 1372.

Tax revenues for 1373 within the framework of the policies and goals of the second economic development plan have been estimated at 6,400 billion rials which is 18.3 percent higher than this year's figures, he said.

In calculating the country's oil revenues for 1373, emphasis has been placed on optimum use of production capacities and oil exports in addition to taking into consideration such factors as developments in international oil market, the president said.

On this basis, the president said, oil revenues for next year have been estimated at 22,096 billion rials.

Rafsanjani put the current expenditure of the 1373 budget bill at 21,154 billion rials, saying the figures registered a 13.9 percent increase compared to last year without taking into account fluctuations in foreign exchange rate and expenses for import of oil products.

In the 1373 budget bill, he said, social services including education, health and welfare have the lion's share in the current expenditure, accounting for 7,863 billion rials and registering an increase of 37 percent compared to this year.

Subsidies to be paid by the government in 1373 include 3,005 billion rials for basic goods, 600 billion rials for chemical fertilizers, 30 billion rials for foodstuff distributed among elementary school pupils free of charge, 30 billion rials for printing of textbooks and 210 billion rials for annual hajj pilgrimage, he said.

President Rafsanjani said a 1,131 billion rial budget has been allocated to relief organizations and those institutes involved in welfare and charity such as the Imam Khomeyni Relief Committee, Shahid Foundation and Welfare Organization under the current expenditure section of the budget bill.

Out of this sum, he said, services will be rendered to 350,000 disabled people of the country.

The president said the development credits for 1373 stood at 12,614 billion rials, up by 30.2 percent compared with the development credits approved for the current Iranian year.

According to Rafsanjani, major industrial projects that will go on stream next year includes: the first phase of Shahid Rajaei thermal power plant, Sarkhod gas refinery, second phase of Arak petrochemical complex and a petrochemical complext at Bandar Imam Khomeyni.

Other projects are the second phase of tyre manufacturing plant in Yazd, 15th Khordad dam, Tajan diversionary dam and two irrigation projects in Saveh and Jonaqan.

Some 5,126 billion rials of the total development budget for 1373 will be spent on exploration, exploitation and transfer of oil, refining and transfer of natural gas and on power and communication projects.

According to the president, the 1373 budget bill gave top priority to development of deprived and less advantaged regions of the country by earmarking 301 billion rials for implementing educational, health and other infrastructural plans in those areas.

He said paying attention to reconstructing war-damaged areas and facilitating return of the war refugees to their home towns was another feature of his proposed budget bill. To this end, development credits from the 1373 general budget total 685 billion rials, he added.

According to Rafsanjani, ensuring sustainable economic development, achieving social justice, increasing people's participation in economic, social and cultural activities and ensuring sustainable cultural development were the four major goals of the 1373 budget bill.

In the course of the second economic development plan (1994-98), Iran's average annual population increase will be 2.3 percent, he said, adding that this meant population would rise to 67.3 million in 1377 (1998) from the present 60 million.

Accordingly, Rafsanjani said, the number of young people at school age will increase from 19.2 million in 1372 to 21 million by the end of the second economic development plan.

During the second economic plan, he said, active population of the country will reach 38.6 million by the year 1998 from the present 32.3 million and population aged 10 and over which is now 42 million will reach 50 million.

With regards to the above-mentioned facts, it will be of great importance for the country to follow up its family planning and birth control plans.

He said that the annual growth of the gross domestic product (gdp) during the second development plan is estimated between 5.4 and six percent and that of investment at between nine to 11 percent.

The following are highlights of the 1373 budget bill outlined by President Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani while submitting the bill to the Majles today: Welfare and socia. security:

This section gives top priority to continuing services to 532,000 members of the families of martyrs. The number of vulnerable people enjoying such services under this program will increase from 3.1 million to 4.1 million by the end of the second economic development plan.

By the end of the second plan, 20 million rural population will be covered by medical insurance and the number of civil servants and workers enjoying the insurance benefits will rise to 29.2 million by 1988 from the present 22.8 million.

Under the program, the number of pensioners, either civil servant or worker, will reach 1.39 million from 1.13 million.

Health care: During the second economic development plan, a total of 6,725 health care centers and clinics will be built in rural and urban areas throughout the country that will bring the number of such centers to 23,386 from the present 16,661.

Some 5,800 villages will be supplied with piped water facilities by 1998. This will increase the number of villages enjoying safe drinking water to 35,300 from the present 29,500. Once implemented, the percentage of rural population who have access to potable water will climb to 90 from the present 84 percent.

In the course of the second five year development plan, 18,000 hospital beds will be added to the present ones, bringing the total number to 111,000 from 93,000 that exsit now.

The ratio of physicains to population is to increase to 74 for every 100,000 people in 1998 from 50 per 100,000 in the current calendar year.

The proportion of under one year old infants vaccinated against six preventable diseases will increase by five percent reaching 95 percent once the second plan is complete.

Public education: The number of school and high school students in the country is expected to touch 19.5 million by 1998 from the present 17.3 million, and vocational training capacity will rise to 5.2 million per month from 2.5 million.

Over the said period, some 108,000 new classrooms and 6,800 workshops for expansion of vocational training will be completed or built.

The rate of literacy among population aged six and over is to reach 84 percent, from 76 percent at present, by the end of the second development plan. Higher education: By 1998, the number of university students will climb from 1.33 million to 1.233 million, with the share of graduate and post graduate students reaching 10.8 percent from 9.4 percent at present.

Tourism: The government has adopted necessary policies to promote tourism industry in the country. Such policies include encouragement of the private sector to play an active role in this respect and increasing capacity of hotels from 34,500 beds to 59,500 beds by 1998.

The number of foreign tourists traveling to Iran annually is expected to rise to 700,000 in 1998 from 320,000 who visted the country in 1993. This will push up the country's income from this industry to 350 million dollars from 160 million dollars it earned in in 1372.

Radio and television: The programs produced by Channel-1 and Channel-2 of the Islamic Republic of Iran Broadcasting (IRIB) are to increase to 1,900 and 1,700 hours per year respectively from the present levels of 1,800 and 1,100 hours per year.

At present 90 percent of population receives programs of the Channel-1 and 83 percent receives the Channel-2 programs. These figures are to be raised to 93.7 and 90.8 percent by the termination of the second economic development plan.

Sports and physical education: The number of state-owned and private gymnasiums and other sports facilities throughout the country will increase by 2,400 to 9,400 in 1998 and the number of sports club members at schools will hit 640,000 from 300,000 at present.

Administration of foreign relations: The most important goals of this section are: Protecting the country's security against foreign threats; preserving the country's territorial integrity; defending all Muslims of the world; promoting Islamic culture; taking necessary measures to attract foreign investment and modern technology.

Housing: During the second economic development plan, some 2.59 million residential units covering a total area of 232 million square meters will be built all over the country. 1,553,000 of these units will be constructed in urban areas and 907,000 in rural areas by the private sector. The remaining 130,000 units will be erected by government firms.

Electricity: The following steps are to be taken during the second development plan to increase the capacity of power plants in Iran: increasing the capacity of power plants by 12,000 megawatts; the prospect of setting up 18 hydroelectric power stations; converting 10 gas power plants into combined cycle plants.

Oil: With completion of several projects including a new oil refinery in Bandar Abbas, southern Iran and the second phase of Abadan refinery, domestic production of oil products will rise from 172,386 cubic meters per day in 1993 to 242,983 cubic meters per day in 1998.

Velayati Interviewed on Syria, Foreign Relations

NC2112083793 Beirut AL-DIYAR in Arabic 17 Dec 93 p 26

[Interview with Foreign Minister 'Ali Akbar Velayati by an unidentified correspondent in Damascus; date not given]

[Excerpts] [passage omitted] [Correspondent] You are perhaps lucky to be a close acquaintance of two presidents, namely those of Iran and Syria. You have been acting as a link between them. You have worked to strengthen relations between the leaders of two friendly brotherly countries. It is said that the two presidents have similar political and leadership thinking. We have learned that you held a lengthy meeting with President al-Asad yesterday. How do you feel after that? Do you agree that Presidents al-Asad and Rafsanjani have a similar leadership mentality?

[Velayati] That's true. The political stances of the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Syrian Arab Republic are similar. Over the past few years there have been many similarities between the policies of the two countries. These similarities still exist and the reason is the common principles in which the two countries believe. Syria's positions are consistent and remain within the framework of the principles to which it has always adhered in its foreign policy.

[Correspondent] Some say that Christopher's recent visit to Syria will compel Syria, especially after the anticipated meeting between Clinton and al-Asad, to proceed toward a settlement with Israel, while the Islamic Republic of Iran does not believe in a settlement with Israel and does not even believe in the principle of negotiations. How can the harmony between Syria and Iran's policies be maintained?

[Velayati] The similarities in the two countries' political positions do not mean that all their political stances are identical. We don't believe Syria must change its policy. We believe that Syria enjoys a strong and capable position. We are confident that in its talks with others, especially the anticipated talks between the Syrian president and the U.S. President, Syria will not forfeit its interests or principled positions.

[Correspondent] Did the subject of the prisoners held by Hizballah emerge in your talks with President al-Asad and other Syrian officials?

[Velayati] No.

[Correspondent] Your answer on Syria maintaining its consistent stances prompts us to ask you another question: Do you feel that President al-Asad and other Syrian officials have changed their positions?

[Velayati] Syria's positions have not changed, but I repeat that this does not necessarily mean that Syria's policy must be the same as Iran's.

[Correspondent] On the two countries' joint positions, have the talks, especially those of the two countries' cooperation council, touched on the practical measures that must be taken to confront coming events? For example, the two countries' stances on the Gaza-Jericho Agreement are identical. Has it been decided during these talks to take steps to help the Palestinian people get rid of the manacles and dangers of this agreement?

[Velayati] Syria and Iran are coordinating on supporting the Palestinian people. Both countries believe that this Gaza-Jericho Agreement is a document of capitulation and a cheap surrender of Palestine. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] Israeli media claim that Iran is a source of trouble for the political process in the region. There is instigation by Peres, Rabin, Israel's supporters, and even some Arab states that Iran is a source of trouble and a headache for the peace process. They hint at the possibility of harming Iran, whether through sanctions or perhaps through aggression. Do you believe this is serious talk against Iran. If it is, has Iran prepared itself for every possibility?

[Velayati] This is a serious issue but it is not new. Since the Islamic Republic of Iran was established, the United States and Israel have done their best to harm Iran. They have not been "stingy" about harming us.

The Iranian people and the state of Iran do not accept Palestine being sold in the slave market. Palestine is a sacred Islamic land and a legitimate homeland for the Palestinians. Holy Jerusalem is revered by all heavenly religions. It is considered the first qiblah [direction toward which Muslims turn to pray] and has the third holiest mosque. It cannot remain under Zionist control.

[Correspondent] [passage omitted] What measures have you taken to confront this media campaign and the threats that might be carried out on a large scale? What measures have you taken to confront such a possibility, which you said is serious?

[Velayati] We must clarify that we will not bargain with the interests of Islam and the Muslims under the pressure of propaganda and mediagames. This psychological and media warfare is a weapon being used in our age. [passage omitted] The weapon is used on a large scale. But it does not weaken our determination or prevent us

from following the correct course. Certainly, we must explain our stance to the world. We are doing so.

The possibility of a step being taken against Iran is nothing new. This happened before. The Iranian people are prepared to defend themselves, their entity, their independence, their Islam, and their aspirations.

[Correspondent] You have made considerable effort to improve relations with the Gulf states and Saudi Arabia. Have your efforts been successful?

[Velayati] The efforts have been made by the two sides. Arab officials have visited Iran. We have reciprocated these visits. This dialogue between the two sides is continuing because it is necessary. This necessity is due to the fact we and they have things in common. We are Muslims and neighbors. We have a common history and joint interests. Naturally, there are other parties that want the differences and conflicts in the region to continue. We must thwart and abort this plot. We are continuing our course of eliminating tension, opening up, and creating an atmosphere of friendship, brotherhood, and cooperation in the region.

[Correspondent] There is talk about the policy of Saudi Arabia, specifically King Fahd. It says he is not inclined to lift the boycott of Israel. He has also begun to change his policy toward certain persecuted Muslim sects in Saudi Arabia. He has begun to give them some freedom and to improve their living conditions. Do you have anything to substantiate this?

[Velayati] We have no direct information about this subject. However, the indirect information that we have received confirms what you have mentioned.

[Correspondent] Regarding the issue of the islands, especially Abu Musa, it has been observed that the Islamic Republic of Iran has not hesitated to implement what it believes is its "right" to these islands. However, some observers are astonished because they know the wisdom of the Iranian leadership dictates that it close the gap between Iran and the Gulf states. How can Iran leave this gap open, as it might be exploited by imperialism, which is lying in wait for Iran and the Gulf states?

[Velayati] The basis of the rights of the two sides to Abu Musa is enshrined in the 1971 agreement. It is in the interest of the two sides to implement this agreement. Not only we but no state would agree to back down and abandon its national interests. If each country is content with its rights, there will be no differences between Iran and its neighbors. If a problem crops up, it must be resolved through dialogue. This is what we have begun and hope will continue. The continuation of this dialogue depends on the decision of the other side. For our part, we are prepared to welcome United Arab Emirates Foreign Minister Shaykh Hamadan in Iran. We welcome any delegation that visits us in Tehran. It is their turn to reciprocate our positive initiative.

[Correspondent] Has Syria played a role in bringing the views of the two sides closer?

[Velayati] The Syrians have always expressed their desire to make an effort in this direction. We greatly appreciate the desire of our Syrian brothers. I believe the big role that Syria can play is to encourage the two sides to talk.

[Correspondent] Have there been any results?

[Velayati] It seems that a meeting will inevitably take place. There are indications that his highness Shaykh Hamadan will visit Tehran in the near future. [passage omitted]

[Correspondent] [passage omitted] Some say that Iran's relations with the Central Asian Islamic states are official relations in the sense that they are not the relations that many expected would result from the formation of a strong front of small states against the oppression of the new world order. What is your answer?

[Velayati] The establishment of good, balanced, and deep-rooted relations among states takes time. It also takes serious effort and work. These republics won their independence only two years ago. These republics do not have enough experience to run their adminisrations and governments. However, they have a strong desire to establish strong, lasting relations with neighboring states, including Iran. For our part, we are satisfied with our relations with these republics. Relations between us and them have developed a lot. This trend is continuing. Several delegations from these states have visited Iran and vice versa. The scope of cooperation is increasing in a serious and noticeable way. We are eager to say that our relations with these states do not conflict with the relations that these states have with any other state. These states have a long way to go before they overcome their problems and fufill their aspirations. However, we have strong indications that they have begun to overcome many of the initial problems that they encountered following independence.

[Correspondent] How do you reconcile your friendship with Armenia and Azerbaijan's strong ties with Iran? Is this due to the hostility between the Turks and Armenians ever since the Turkish massacres of the Armenians? Is there a kind of sympathy toward the Armenians because of these massacres?

[Velayati] We have good-neighborly relations with the two countries. We are eager for the conflict between the two neighboring countries to end as soon as possible. We are making great and diligent efforts in this direction.

[Correspondent] How do you reconcile your revolutionary, anti-imperialist policy and your rapprochement with the Moroccan regime, known as the "coordinator of Israeli affairs" in the Maghreb and the East, if not the "pioneer" of normalization with Israel. How do you also explain Iran's attempt at rapprochement with an Arab state that has established relations with Israel?

[Velayati] When we establish official and political relations with a certain state, this does not mean that our foreign policy agrees with that state's foreign policy. [passage omitted]

Moroccan Foreign Minister Meets Majles Speaker

LD2112165993 Tehran IRNA in English 1444 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Tehran, Dec. 21, IRNA—Majles speaker Hojjat ol-Eslam 'Ali Akbar Nateq-Nuri here Tuesday [21 December] stressed that only enemies of Islam would benefit from discord among Muslims.

He made the remark in a meeting with the visiting Moroccan foreign minister, Abdellatif Filali, and emphasized the need for reviving the numerous common points among the Islamic states.

The Moroccan foreign minister underlined the need to adopt an identical stand by Islamic states on international issues and called for expansion of Tehran-Rabat relations in all fields.

Both sides further underscored the importance of formation of parliamentary friendship groups.

Filali invited Nateq-Nuri to visit Morocco on behalf of his country's parliament speaker.

The Moroccan foreign minister arrived in Tehran on a two-day visit this morning.

Discusses Cooperation With President

LD2112172593 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 1630 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] President Hashemi-Rafsanjani received Moroccan foreign Minister Abdellatif Filali, this afternoon.

In this meeting, the Moroccan foreign minister conveyed the warm greetings of King Hassan II, and expressed the profound willingness of the government and the people of Morocco to expand the field of cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran. He added: We attach considerable importance to contacts and exchange of views between the Islamic scholars of Iran and Morocco. We hope our cooperation in this realm may develop further.

Mr. Hashemi-Rafsanjani, in turn, expressed gratitude for the remarks made by the Moroccan foreign minister, and welcomed the expansion of bilateral cooperation. He added: Like you, we too, welcome the expansion of our cooperation, and believe that the exchange of views between our respective countries can have a positive impact on regional and international issues.

The president of our country, moreover, stressed the need for the executive officials of the two countries to identify more grounds for bilateral cooperation. He said: Present conditions in the Islamic world make it necessary that countries such as Iran and Morocco should indulge in more cooperation in various fields, particularly in connection with international issues and problems peculiar to Islamic world.

Commentary Views Christopher's Mideast Mission

NC1912154193 Tehran JAHAN-E ESLAM in Persian 8 Dec 93 pp 1, 2

[Unattributed commentary: "The Objectives of Christopher's Visit"]

[Excerpts] Warren Christopher commenced his periodic visit to Europe and the Middle East a few days ago and is seeking to formulate the strategy of a new U.S. foreign policy, which has absorbed the full attention of the U.S. diplomatic apparatus. In this regard, Christopher is pursuing parallel aims, which one can see are part of the same policy. Whipping up an anti-Iranian atmosphere and accelerating the trend of Arab-Israel compromise are the two objectives Christopher is pursuing.

Pressure against Iran on two fronts, Europe and the Middle East, in the current circumstances stems from Iran's inflexible foreign policy with regard to issues and problems the United States is facing in the Middle East. Political experts and the U.S. and Israeli officials have openly acknowledged that Iran's political stance on the Gaza-Jericho accord and Iran's overt and clear opposition to the collective measures pertaining to the trend of compromise between the Arabs and Israel causes great apprehension in the United States.

This is because the major impediments such as the intifadah in occupied Palestine, the unwillingness of public opinion in the Islamic countries to accept the compromise process, and the struggles of the Islamic Resistance in Lebanon are among the important factors which, if they remain constant, can dash all the hopes of the Arab-Israeli compromise process to the ground.

The United States and Israel are trying to minimize the importance of this obstacle and to convey the impression that these problems are merely peripheral by using propaganda and carrying on psychological warfare, but it is evident that the White House realizes very well that the actual destabilizing factor in Israel is the distinctive set of circumstances prevailing in the occupied territories.

Despite the PLO accord with the Zionist regime, the expectations of the United States and Israel have not materialized; and with the appearance of an extensive and widening fissure in the Fatah movement's ranks and the continuation of the intifadah, Israel feels that in order to reach its goals, it needs to take more drastic actions. With its extensive political investment in resolving the Arab-Israeli dispute, the United States will not be able to continue its political strategy in the entire Middle East region since it has not even gotten a minimum payoff yet.

There currently is pressure and blackmail against Iran because, considering the importance of Iran's stance, the United States believes that any Iranian retreat from its political stance would decrease the influence of the Islamic Resistance in the entire region and pave the way for the ultimate suppression of the intifadah. The obvious fact is that the movements that have sprung up in Occupied Palestine, Lebanon, and in Muslim countries such as Egypt and Algeria are based on the people and are principled, and the fact that they continue is due to the fact that the Muslim people of thes countries comprehend the Islamic trend. Any compromise by the factions or governments in those countries will never enjoy popular backing in practice.

The problem of Saddam [Husayn] remains unresolved; and the persistence of this perpetual and chronic factor of instability in the Persian Gulf makes U.S. policies extremely vulnerable. Despite the fact that, to a certain extent, these policies collectively create circumstances conducive to the sale of U.S. and European weapons and justify and serve to consolidate th U.S. military presence in the region, in the long r un the United States will not be able to resist the Muslim sensitivity that has arisen in the region. Even now, the sociopolitical situations of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait have created such problems for their respective governments. [passage omitted]

In the past few years, the United States and Europe have encountered acute and proliferating conflicts in all political and economic areas, the European officials are taking these seriously. Therefore all their efforts are concentrated on a swift solution to the Middle East problems.

It is against this complex backdrop that Christopher is making extensive efforts to advance the White House's strategies. There is evidence that his European trip has not been successful. His harshly-worded statements labelling Iran an insurgent, and his criticism of the stances of the European countries prove that the diplomatic apparatus of the White House has not been able to get what it wants. This has undermined the U.S. stance in the Arab-Israel peace process. [passage omitted]

In his meetings with Arab heads of state, Christopher has endeavored to magnify and distort Iran's stances in order to motivate them to expedite the trend of compromise. The unprecedented instability in the oil market, which appears to be a calculated move, can to a certain extent be considered a means of exerting pressure on countries such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and the UAE.

All these things show that the United States is seeking to continue its policies in the Middle East. There is information that indicates that the United States is taking steps to generate tension in some of these countries in order to persuade them to expedite the Arab-Israel trend of compromise.

However, Christopher's talks have not yet been able to get clear results, and the feeling of dissatisfaction in the U.S. hierarchy can be seen in the scant coverage given to this visit by the Western mass media. We can say even at this juncture that Christopher has not been able to achieve the anticipated results, and this will only increase the ambiguity of the situation in the Middle East.

Commentary Views Current GCC Meeting in Riyadh

LD2112211593 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1930 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Unattributed commentary]

[Excerpts] Leaders of six GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] states, who started their 14th session in Riyadh last night, are still discussing the topics on the agenda.

Among the axis under discussion in the gathering determined by the member-states' foreign ministers last Saturday is the setting up of relations with the Zionist regime and lifting of the trade embargo on that regime. [passage omitted]

At the same time, the establishment of security in the GCC member states forms the most basic topic on the agenda for deliberation by the foreign ministers.

Although their governments have experienced various ways to create security, which wasted colossal amounts of money and caused alien interference, it seems they are still worried at this important issue.

Political observers believe that past experiences in the Persian Gulf, and even those in other parts of the world, have shown that as long as all the countries in a certain region do not participate in a common security plan, a real and lasting security will not prevail. Therefore, so long as six, out of the eight Persian Gulf littoral states, only try to establish security in the region, and that through the presence of the aliens, the setting up of real calm in the Persian Gulf seems farfetched, especially that foreign countries, in order to attain their illegitimate interests, endeavor to create an atmosphere of misunderstanding.

The misconceptions between the United Arab Emirates [UAE] and Iran about the Iranian islands in the Persian Gulf are worth pondering in this very connection.

To this end the Islamic Republic of Iran, under its plan concerning the resolution of regional differences, based on understanding and non-interference of the aliens, since the very beginning embarked on mutual and direct talks.

In case of practical measures taken by the UAE, the last comment made by the UAE emir and the foreign minister of that country, regarding the inclination to hold peaceful talks so as to remove the misunderstanding which has its roots somewhere outside the region, can offer an appropriate method to solve such problems which are not rare in the Persian Gulf region.

Commentary Views Habibi's Visit to Turkey

NC2112162993 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in Turkish 1630 GMT 20 Dec 93

[Unattributed commentary: "Vice President Hasan Habibi's Visit to Turkey"]

[Text] Vice President Hasan Habibi arrived in Ankara on a three-day official visit to Turkey. He will hold talks with high-ranking Turkish officials on economic and political matters. A high-ranking political and economic delegation is accompanying Habibi. The minister of heavy industry and the minister of transportation are also accompanying him. The talks that will be held between the officials of the two countries are expected to discuss matters related to their cooperation on bilateral and regional issues.

As neighboring countries, Iran and Turkey have long-standing relations. The moves they have made to strengthen their relations indicate the importance they attach to their political and economic cooperation and the safeguarding of their common interests. Several political and economic observers are convinced that the relations between Tehran and Ankara can be assessed from two angles: The first of which is the economic cooperation within ECO [Economic Cooperation Organization], and the second is the political cooperation between Iran and Turkey. Considering the fact that these two aspects of their bilateral cooperation cannot be ignored, the relations between Iran and Turkey must be regarded as very important from a strategic viewpoint. In view of that, the agreements reached between the Iranian and Turkish delegations during the past few months apply to many aspects of the two countries' bilateral and regional cooperation on political, economic, and security matters. Several joint political, security, and economic meetings have been held in Tehran and Ankara. The sides reached important agreements in their talks—agreements that will create a favorable atmosphere for further improving the relations between the two sides in various fields.

In view of that, Hasan Habibi's visit to Ankara can be assessed as a continuation of the effort the two countries have made to improve and deepen their bilateral relations. Considering the talks Habibi will hold with Prime Minister Ciller and the other officials in Turkey, we can say that the relations between Tehran and Ankara in various fields will be brighter in the future.

As members of the ECO and the Islamic Conference Organization, Iran and Turkey have many opportunities to improve their bilateral and regional relations. However, the experience the two countries have gained on matters related to their ties indicates that they can benefit from the existing potential to meet their needs only if they act with mutual understanding on regional, political, and economic matters. The present understanding in their relations indicates that the conditions have been created for the achievement of that objective.

Marine Exercises Begin in Gulf, Strait

LD2212090693 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0730 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] The joint amphibious Val-Fajr-2 maneuvers under the direction and command of the Khatem ol-Anbiyah base have begun in the waters of the Persian Gulf and the strategic Hormuz Straits.

The experienced frogmen from the first, second, and third naval zones of the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps, and the first and second naval zones of the Islamic Republic of Iran's armed forces, are taking part in these maneuvers. The Val-Fajr-2 maneuvers will last for six days and will include exercises such as: jumping from helicopters, underwater demolition, searches on the coast of the imaginary enemy, and raids on the imaginary enemy's naval platform jetty installations.

Minister Announces Gas Reserves Found in Gulf

LD2212104793 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Excerpt] Oil Ministry experts have discovered large gas reserves in the Persian Gulf. Mr. Aqazadeh, our country's oil minister, announced this at a news conference in Bandar-e 'Abbas last night. He said: This huge gas reservoir contains large amounts of gases. In terms of worth it is like the South Pars gas reserves. More details will be given to the public once the exploration is completed.

Our country's oil minister said that at present, our country's accessible oil reserves are over 90 billion barrels and gas reserves are more than 20 trillion cubic meters.

Referring to the fact that Hormozgan province is one of the most important oil and gas areas, he said: In Khuzestan, Darkhoyen, border areas, the northeast, and the Caspian Sea, there are vast oil and gas potentials. Through future investment in the exploration of those God-given reserves, the level of accessible oil and gas in our country will be very high.

Mr. Aqazadeh said the eighth Bandar-e 'Abbas oil refinery is one of the biggest refineries in the world and one of our country's most important national projects in the oil industry. He added: The erection of that refinery is set at a cost of $1.6 billion. Once it is commissioned 24,000 barrels of heavy crude oil will be refined every day and many oil by-products will be produced and supplied to domestic markets. In comparison with exporting crude oil and importing the country's required oil by-products, its products have a very high added value. [passage omitted]

Students, Staff Back Khamene'i, Present Scroll

NC1812131793 Tehran SALAM in Persian 8 Dec 93 p 11

[IRNA report from Ahvaz]

[Text] The Hezbollahis at Ahvaz universities presented a scroll to the great leader [Khamene'i] yesterday in support of his remarks.

In this 10-meter long scroll, which was signed by the Hezbollahi staff and students of the Martyr Chamran University and the Medical University in Ahvaz, the ill-omened and crude murmurings by the simple-minded ones calling for relations with the United States have been denounced.

It was stated in this scroll: The venomous and diabolical thoughts and dastardly actions intended to spread deviant trends, the thesis of an Islam minus the clergy, other modes of thinking akin to freemasonry, the isolation of the active stratum of the Hezbollah, and the depoliticizing of the universities. All these should be combated, and their influence should not be permitted to proliferate and spread.

Pakistan

AFP: Peacekeeping Troops To Remain in Somalia

BK2112162493 Hong Kong AFP in English 1540 GMT 21 Dec 93

[Text] Islamabad, Dec 21 (AFP)—Pakistan has agreed to keep its contingent in Somalia after a positive response from President Bill Clinton's envoy on a request for heavy weapons, official sources said here Tuesday [21 December].

Clinton's coordinator on Somalia, James Dobbins, held detailed discussions with senior defence and foreign ministry officials on the U.N. peace keeping operations in Somalia.

Sources said at the end of his two day stay that the talks were "substantive and meaningful."

Dobbins briefed the Pakistani officials on the peace talks held in the Ethiopian capital recently and the United Nations strategy for political reconciliation and economic reconstruction of Somalia, which has been ravaged by civil war.

The United States has decided to pull out its troops from Operation Restore Hope, which attracted the participation of 29 nations.

The 29,000 strong U.N. force included some 5,000 Pakistani soldiers, who have suffered 32 fatalities in clashes with local warlords since taking up peacekeeping duties last year.

Dobbin's visit followed reports from Mogadishu that Washington was considering the possibility of replacing the American soldiers with additional Pakistani troops.

Local news agency PPI, quoting officials, said Pakistan reiterated its "commitment to the concept of the peacekeeping operation and its constant support to the noble cause."

They said the success of the U.N. effort was essential to preserve the credibility of the world body's endeavours for peace and stability in other parts of the world.

Sources said the Pakistani side raised all aspects considered essential for Pakistani troops to successfully carry out the peace operations in Somalia.

The U.S. response to the request for supplying heavy weapons to Pakistani peacekeepers in Somalia was "very positive," they said.

The foreign office last week said Islamabad was considering the U.N. request to beef up its contingents. It did not give the size of the proposed Pakistani reinforcement.

Informed sources said Pakistan might send another brigade, about 1,500 soldiers, to Somalia in the near future.

Defense Committee Meets, Abandons F-16 Deal

BK2212084093 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 22 Dec 93 pp 1, 10

[Text] Islamabad, Dec. 21—The Defence Committee of the Cabinet [DCC] Tuesday abandoned the $1.4 billion F-16 programme and allocated 3.5 billion dollars for the optional fighter bombers besides 900 million dollars for two submarines. The committee also discussed the programme for the main battle tank for the army. Presided by the Prime Minister the DCC had two separate sessions. Apart from Ministers for Defence, Foreign Affairs and Interior and advisers for finance, the meeting was attended by the Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and the three services chiefs. Senior officials of the Ministries of Defence, Foreign Affairs, Interior and Finance also attended the first session. The official handout issued later in the day said that the meeting discussed the geo-political situation prevailing in the region. It said that various issues relating to internal and external security of the country also came under discussion. According to the well-informed defence sources, various presentations about SU-27, Mirage-2000-5 and three submarines from France, Sweden and China were given in the first session that lasted 3 hours. Besides, the main battle tank, the matter relating to M series tank re-build factory in collaboration with General Dynamics and ongoing upgradation programme of Mirage-3 also came up for discussion. According to our defence sources, the second 2 hour session was closed-door with only the Prime Minister, Foreign Minister, Defence Minister and three services chiefs in attendance. Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali apprised the committee of his talks with the Lockheed team and their proposals to restructure the payment schedule for the F-16. He is

believed to have suggested to the committee that Pakistan should pay the token money amounting to 25 million dollars which constitutes only four percent of the total amount Pakistan has paid so far.

According to the sources, the chief of the Air Staff opposed the proposal saying that Pakistan should not make the token payment to the Lockheed at this stage. The Air Chief said that the US Air Force has so far released only 300 million dollars to the Lockheed company out of 658 million dollars paid by Pakistan. He suggested that instead of paying another 25 million at this point the US Air Force should be asked to release 25 million dollars to the Lockheed company. The meeting felt that in case of arbitration, Pakistan's case gets weakened by any payment at this stage to the Lockheed.

Sources said the PAF [Pakistan Air Force] has already made up its mind to abandon the 'dead deal'. The air force has strongly pleaded for fresh allocations of 3.5 billion dollars for the optional fighter bomber. Though a high-level team of air force experts is currently evaluating SU-27 in Russia, the PAF is all set to acquire Mirage-2000-5 from France. The Lockheed on the other hand, has lined up their round of meetings with other buyers for the disposal of the equipments and engines built for Pakistan's F-16 programme from Jan 1 to Jan 16. Sources say that in case of arbitration, it would take Pakistan three to four years to recover the money and that too not it full. The sources say that in case of new acquisitions, Pakistan will not be able to get Mirages or Russian aircraft before 1996. The Air Chief has strongly recommended to the government the acquisitions of Mirage-2000-5 as an alternative to F-16. He rejected the misconception that Mirage-2000-5 was phasing out. He argued that the aircraft would remain operational in France as well as Taiwan for the next 6 to 7 years. Our sources strictly maintain that Mirage-2000-5 was not only a very expensive bird and was gradually phasing out. They said that Mirage-2000-5 offered to Pakistan are primarily interception and do not have multi-dimensional role to support the land forces. Besides the craft has deficiency of carrying NATO munition. They also said that by the time Pakistan actually acquires the fleet of 40 Mirage-2000-5 the cost of the whole package will shoot up five to six billion dollars which does not include operational and maintenance cost. The sources said that French Air Force is inducting Raffeal and Taiwan is inducting F-16 from the US. Therefore Pakistan will be the sole dubious owner of Mirage-2000-5.

DCC also discussed the acquisition of three submarines for Navy with substantial transfer of technology. M/S Kockum of Sweden has offered A-19 Gotland submarine with 720 million dollar price tag. M/S DCNI of France have offered a new type of submarine Agosta-90 which would be tailor made for Pakistan. The total price of the package is 4022 million French franc. The Chinese firm M/S CSSC has offered to supply 3 S-20 submarines which are similar to those which are at present in the service of the Chinese Navy. The cost is about 514 million US dollars. A high-powered committee headed by Mr A.G.N. Kazi was set up for conducting negotiations with the suppliers for finalising the contract for the most suitable submarine. According to the well-informed sources though Pakistan Navy has carried out extensive and objective technical evaluations of these submarines, it is alleged it may not be able to procure the most suitable submarine due to political pressures.

The DCC also allocated the funds for the ongoing upgradation of Mirage-3 aircraft at Kamra. It decided that after rebuilding and upgradation of two aircraft, tests and trials will be conducted. If these aircraft are found satisfactory, more allocations will be made for the upgradation of remaining aircraft.

In the context of the geo-political situation, the Committee reviewed situation in the Indian-occupied Kashmir, forthcoming Secretaries level talks between India and Pakistan, and tensions in Siachen and other related issues.

The Prime Minister apprised the committee of her talks with the leaders of Iran and Turkey on cooperation in the sphere of defence cooperation. She also briefed the Committee of the agenda of talks during her meetings with the Chinese leaders and Korean leaders during her upcoming visits to countries.

Government Charged With 'Credibility Problem'

BK1812085193 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 18 Dec 93 p 6

[Editorial: "Don't Fool the Nation"]

[Text] It appears that the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Government is creating a serious credibility problem for itself. The opposition had been arguing from day one that the new administration has come to power to carry out an agenda given to it by Washington. This may be far-fetched but the PPP-led government instead of blunting this propaganda seems to be doing all it can to authenticate it.

Only a couple of days ago, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto speaking at a businessmen's meeting at Lahore had declared firmly that her government would do what is good for Pakistan and would not be dictated by the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Now her Finance Secretary, Qazi Alimullah, has disclosed that Pakistan has accepted the IMF conditionalities to qualify for dollars 1.2 billion assistance. He has said that the policy frame-work paper has been confirmed by Islamabad and a letter accepting conditionalities has been sent to the IMF.

Similarly, the new administration has been vociferous in rebutting the Opposition's charge that it has agreed to roll back Pakistan's nuclear programme. All the same, Senator Larry Pressler of the United States disclosed in Islamabad a couple of days ago that Pakistan along with India has agreed to open its nuclear facilities to international inspection. It is not clear if the visiting US

Senators obtained Pakistan's agreement during their meeting with top Pakistani leaders but Pressler left none in doubt on his claim that they have agreed. There has been no denial of his assertion from any official quarter. Instead, whatever the spokesman of the Foreign Office has said in Islamabad emphasises two points. One, the Foreign Office has not been taken into confidence on the agreement conveyed by the country's top leadership to the US Senators. Two, the Foreign Office welcomes the agreement if it is there. This seems like an initial step towards gently steering public opinion on the road to denuclearisation.

In the case of IMF conditionalities, the Finance Secretary has argued that there is nothing wrong in those because Pakistan wants to improve its economy and achieve on its own the IMF's laid down targets on the GDP, budgetary deficit, inflation and other important aspects of the national economy. The thrust of the Foreign Office spokesman is that if India had agreed to international inspection, it is a major breakthrough for Pakistan. It is a different issue altogether whether the conditionalities of the IMF and the alleged Indian readiness to open the doors of its nuclear research facilities, are good for Pakistan. But the local handling of the two issues raises an important question: why mislead the public in Pakistan on vital issue of the general direction of the economy and more so on a matter of life and death for this nation?

Editorial Views Nuclear, Siachen Glacier Issues

BK1712095193 Peshawar THE FRONTIER POST in English 17 Dec 93 p 10

[Editorial: "'Inspection' and the Siachen Issue"]

[Text] Two questions have cropped up. The first is that Senator Pressler says India and Pakistan are ready to open their nuclear plants to inspection by IAEA [International Atomic Energy Agency]. The second is that Pakistan no longer wants an agreement about withdrawal from the Siachen glacier. Mr. Pressler says it is not clear which of the two countries would first submit to inspection, but he is sure the two inspections are linked. Now if the inspection business is what the NPT [Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty] lays down, then India seems to have had second thoughts on its defiant position. Pakistan has always accepted inspection provided India did the same. But if India wants to do a North Korea on the Americans, then Pakistan can't open up Kahuta without first making sure that India opens up all the half-a-dozen uninspected plants. There is no question of the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] government going in for a unilateral striptease. The PML [Pakistan Muslim League] (N) is already sharpening the knives over Inspection.

The posture over Siachen has changed Ms Bhutto's first government after 1988 almost clinched a withdrawal agreement with Rajiv Gandhi, but the Indians pulled back at the last moment. Now Ms Bhutto's second government no longer wants it. The reason is not far to seek. In fact, there are two reasons. First Islamabad has woken up to the possibility that Siachen may be used either as a 'concession' to water down Pakistan's plebiscite-linked stance on Kashmir or a 'confidence-building' measures that serves to defuse the current tensions in the Indo-Pak equation. Second, India is spending two crore rupees a day on Siachen, and allowing it to withdraw through a face-saving bilateral treaty would be helping the enemy at a time when it is under pressure. Somewhere in the fastness of Islamabad, there are strategists who feel that India is under pressure to 'give' on Kashmir and that this is the time when Pakistan should notch up its stance to the maximum so that when the denouncement comes, Pakistan is in a position to gain from the process of climbing down. Since Pakistan's tactical advantage is hinged on international support on Kashmir, it has to play 'soft ball' on its nuclear programme (it is already well-placed by espousing non-proliferation), and play 'hardball' on Kashmir. it is India that stands athwart the West's resolve to remove proliferation from the globe and is faced with ostracism. Since it would have no truck with Pakistan, it has to bear the brunt of Islamabad's internationally concerted diplomacy on the issues of non-proliferation and Kashmir.

Role of SAARC, ECO After GATT Deal Viewed

BK1912091393 Karachi DAWN in English 19 Dec 93 p 11

[Editorial: "GATT: Success at Last"]

[Text] By the deadline of December 15, set by the US Congress, the delegates of 117 nations wrapped up in Geneva the seven-year long Uruguay Round of negotiations to lay down new rules and reuglations under which all trading nations should conduct their three-trillion dollar business. The long patience-testing talks had many moments of hopes and despair, success and failures, and at times the deadlock seemed unbreakable, threatening the collapse of the multilateral system painstakingly evolved over the last 45 years. As the stakes were too high and the prospects of consequential protectionism fraught with fearful consequences, especially for the leading players, perseverance was never abandoned, and it has paid off.

The agreement, the largest ever in the history of the world, taking effect on July 1, 1995, covers 12 sectors of goods and services out of the 15 which were the focus of negotiations. Those on which agreement could not be reached include financial services, civil aviation and trade in audio-visual products. As the new dispensation visualises cuts in 8000 tariff areas by 50 per cent on products mostly traded among the US, EC and Japan and by 33 per cent on goods exported by developing countries, it is expected to generate an annual global growth of as much as 200 billion dollars. Major beneficiaries will obviously be the developed countries, claiming about 124 billion dollars, while the gains of Third World countries are estimated at 16 billion dollars.

The main area of contention throughout the long period of negotiations was the subsidies given for agricultural products in the EC and for rice by Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. The United States, Australia and New Zealand fought a battle royal over the issue. Finally, an accord was reached by Japan and South Korea partially opening up their rice markets and by the US agreeing to adjust 30 million tonnes of present French grain stocks and not fixing the targets cropwise but accepting the broad classification of cereals. Thus, farmers have now become entitled to export more of subsidised grains and beef.

The Geneva accord brings, for the first time, the 200-billion-dollar textile trade within the discipline of GATT although the Multi Fibre Agreement (MFA) will still remain in force for another ten years. The phasing out of the quota under MFA, demanded by the US and EC to take 15 years, will, however, not provide much of immediate relief to the textile exporters as it allows slow relaxation resulting in nominal increases in the initial stage and accelerated growth towards the end of the 10-year period. Thus, the benefits of the Uruguay Round would not accrue much to Pakistan and other textile exporters for a long time. The US and the EC at the last minute attempted to link the MFA phase-out benefits with the opening up of textile exporters markets to the developed countries' textile products. The demand was withdrawn only when the risk of crossing the deadline and a consequent breakdown became all too apparent. The US and the EC still retain powers to take unilateral actions under their anti-dumping laws to curb textile exports from developing countries in the name of unfair trade practices. Pakistan is currently facing action, without any convincing evidence, in certain categories on a charge of routing its textile products through third countries.

The major and the lasting benefit of the Uruguay Round is the creation of a new multilateral trade organisation (MTO). This body would supervise the enforcement of the GATT discipline in trade of goods and services and prevent dominant partners from taking damaging unilateral action. The US had shot down a similar proposal of creating a World Trade Organisation immediately after World War II. At that time, a world forum for regulation of trade did not suit the US. Now it is more confident and this is reflected in President Clinton's reaction to the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round. He said: "It ensured America's position of leadership in the new global economy."

The Uruguay Round falls far short of the expectations of the developing countries. These countries are disappointed with the low growth rates allowed in textile exports and with the continuance of unilateral actions under national laws relating to anti-dumping and unfair trade practices.

The developed countries are now likely to put up quality barriers for the developing countries' products. Pakistan as an exporter of rice would welcome the opening up of the Japanese, South Korean and Taiwanese markets. As most of the tariff cut relate to industrial products. Pakistan would have to diversify its exports in order to benefit from the resultant expansion of world trade. Our dependence on raw cotton, textiles and rice limits our chances of benefiting from the expected opportunities. Even in cotton products, we are not ready to lessen our dependence on yarn (all the concessions given recently went to yarn) and to devote our efforts to upgrade our textile products. The requirement of the modern manufacturing processes demands an enlargement of markets. Hence the future belongs to regional trade groupings. Our survival in a fiercely competitive world calls for revitalising SAARC in the east and ECO in the west and for this local or regional conflicts should not be allowed to come in the way of vital national interests.

Spokesman on Minister's Postponed Visit to Kabul

BK2212024893 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali will visit Afghanistan early next month. A Foreign Office spokesman said in Islamabad that a new date for his visit will be announced after consultations between the two governments. The spokesman said that because the Afghan president is currently visiting Tajikistan, and the Pakistani foreign minister is scheduled to accompany the prime minister during her visit to the PRC, it will not be possible for him to visit Afghanistan this month.

Sri Lanka

President Issues Security Regulations

BK2112114693 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] President D.B. Wijetunga has promulgated a series of regulations under Section Five of the Public Security Ordinance. It sets down severe penalties on sedition and incitement. The emergency miscellaneous powers and provisions regulations have been amended for this purpose. These regulations are effective with immediate effect. Any person found guilty will be imposed with vigorous imprisonment which will extend to at least three months, but shall not extend to more than 20 years, and may also be liable to a fine.

Former Opposition Leader Appointed Minister

BK1712132193 Hong Kong AFP in English 0742 GMT 17 Dec 93

[Text] Colombo, Dec 17 (AFP)—Sri Lankan President Dingiri Banda Wijetunga on expanded his 26-member cabinet Friday by appointing former opposition chief Anura Bandaranaike, the son of two premiers, as minister of higher education.

Bandaranaike, who defected to the ruling United National Party (UNP) in November from the main opposition, the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP), was sworn in as minister at the president's office here, an official statement said.

The higher education ministry previously came under W.J.M. Lokubandara who held the combined portfolio of education, higher education and culture. Lokubandara, however, has been retained as minister of education and cultural affairs.

The last time Wijetunga made changes to the cabinet was in August when he carried out a minor re-shuffle.

Bandaranaike left the SLFP amid a bitter family power struggle. His supporters accuse his mother and party leader Sirima of grooming his sister Chandrika for the SLFP mantle.

Both Sirima and her late husband Solomon were former prime ministers.

Meanwhile Sri Lanka's former high-profile finance minister, Ronnie de Mel, has re-joined the UNP after leaving the party in 1988 following differences with the late president Ranasinghe Premadasa.

The state-run Daily News said that De Mel, who was one of the country's longest serving Finance Ministers from 1977 to 1988, met President Wijetunga late Thursday after being re-admitted to the party.

Gerry de Silva Appointed New Army Commander

BK1812113293 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 18 Dec 93

[Text] President D.B. Wijetunge has appointed Major General Gerry de Silva as the new commander of the Sri Lanka Army and promoted him to the rank of lieutenant general with effect from 1 January 1994, a military spokesman told LANKAPUVATH yesterday. The 53-year-old new army commander joined the forces in May 1960. He had his initial military training at the prestigious Royal Military Academy at Sandhurst in the United Kingdom.

Security Forces Inflict 'Heavy Losses' on LTTE

BK1912113693 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 19 Dec 93

[Text] The security forces inflicted heavy losses on the LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] in two separate incidents near Pooneryn during the last 48 hours. A military spokesman told newsmen that Sri Lankan naval patrol craft had destroyed five boats carrying terrorists moving in the sea southwest of Pooneryn between (Davis Point) and (Kulminaye Point). Most of the occupants of the boats are believed to be drowned or dead. The boats were seen drifting in the sea. The military spokesman also said the Army commandos had successfully ambushed and attacked a group of about 25 LTTE terrorists just north of (Komer Point) in the Pooneryn area yesterday. Four LTTE cadres were confirmed killed, while four soldiers were slightly wounded by a terrorist hand grenade.

LTTE Reportedly Executes Nine Civilians

BK2212113893 Colombo Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation International Service in English 1045 GMT 22 Dec 93

[Text] Tamil guerrillas in northern Sri Lanka have executed nine civilians for collaborating with the security forces. Tamil sources in the region said that LTTE [Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam] announced the executions published in the Jaffna Peninsula. [sentence as heard] The nine collaborators were (?executed in) Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Maha Kulam, which are under Tiger control. Tamil sources said that similar LTTE killings in the past have been carried out by firing squads.